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TWO YEARS AMONG THE SAVAGES OF NEW GUINEA

W. D. PITCAIRN

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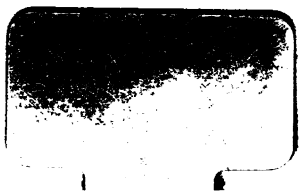

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TWO YEARS AMONG
THE
SAVAGES OF NEW GUINEA

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TWO YEARS AMONG THE SAVAGES OF NEW GUINEA.

WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTES ON NORTH QUEENSLAND.

BY

W. D. PITCAIRN,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY AND ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE MANCHESTER GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

With a Map.

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To my Friend

OSCAR SOELBERG,

WITH WHOM I HAVE SPENT MANY HAPPY DAYS

IN NEW GUINEA,

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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PREFACE.

As every Bill has a preamble, so, I suppose, every book should have a preface. At any rate, such appears to be the universal custom, and I, being of an orthodox turn of mind, am not going to depart from the general rule. Some months ago I mentioned to an acquaintance of mine, a gentleman of considerable literary attainments, that I purposed writing a book on New Guinea, describing my experiences, etc. He replied "Why, the subject is thrashed out, and writings on New Guinea are overdone." I may state that, as the said gentleman had never been in that country, I was not biassed by his opinion.

Had he said that the few writers on New Guinea were thrashed out, he would have been nearer to the mark, as the subject of a country so vast, and the civilised settlement of which is in its infancy, will not be thrashed out for many years to come. We do not all wear the same pair of spectacles. I have endeavoured to describe places and people as they appeared to me. Whether the results as set forth in this work will be found satisfactory or otherwise must be decided by its readers.

W. D. PITCAIRN.

The Vicarage, Eccles, June, 1890.

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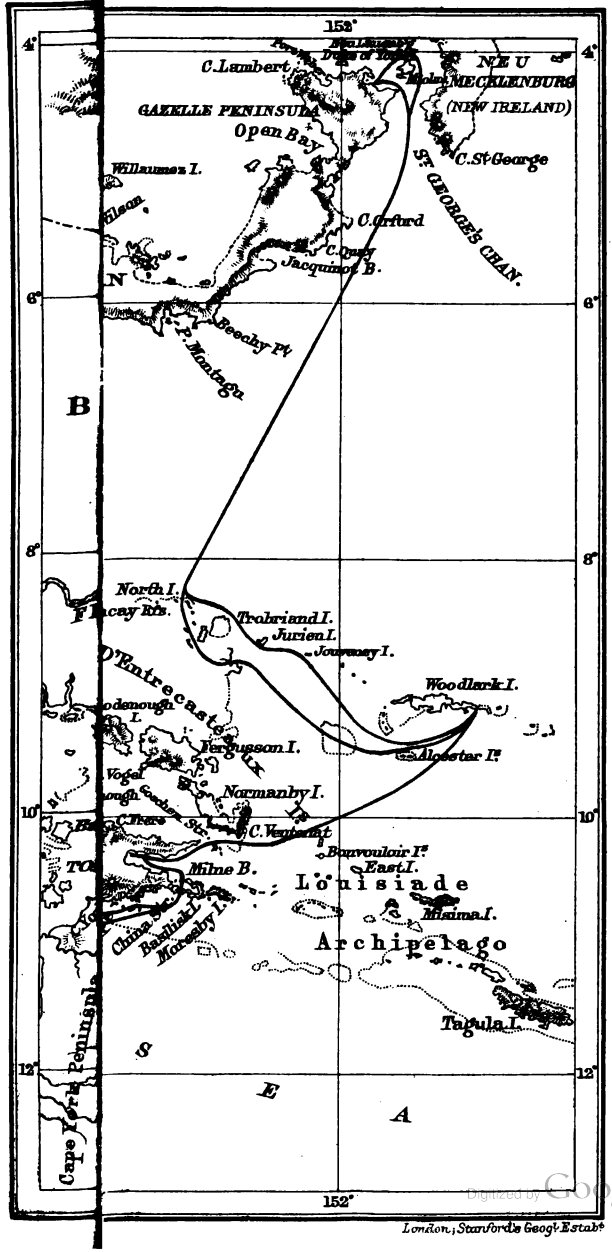

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GLEN OSMOND
N.°
MECHANICS INSTITUTE

TWO YEARS AMONG THE SAVAGES OF NEW GUINEA.

INTRODUCTION.

NORTH QUEENSLAND.

ABOUT seven years ago, when living in South Queensland, I happened to come across a small book on New Guinea, which I devoured with great appetite; so much so that I determined, some time or another, to visit that little-known country, with its interesting savage inhabitants.

Two years afterwards I found my way up to Cooktown, North Queensland, which is situated immediately opposite the shores of New Guinea.

I remained in the Cook district for two years, previous to embarking for the home of the Papuans.

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Before taking the reader over with me, let me introduce him to Cooktown, which is a fair type of a Northern Colonial Township.

Cooktown is situated on the Endeavour River in lat. 15° 30 south, and long. 145° east.

It derives its name from the immortal Captain Cook, who visited the site on which it stands in or about the year 1770, and beached his vessel, named the *Endeavour*, on the north shore, which is on the opposite side of the harbour to the town.

The vessel had sprung a leak, so Captain Cook chose a suitable spot where there was little surf, in order to make the necessary repairs.

How different was its appearance from that of the present time. Then, everything was in its primeval state. Crowds of savages lined the north shore, and interfered with Captain Cook's men in their work. The sailors had often to keep them back by force of arms.

Even at the present day, blacks are living there, but their numbers are sadly reduced.

Occasionally the monotony of their existence is varied by fights with the Normanby River

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blacks, who are more warlike and numerous, and who periodically make raids on them. Spears are then to be seen flying in all directions, and after several days' severe fighting, in which one or two are killed, and maybe one or two wounded, peace is once more restored, and the belligerent party returns to its river haunts.

The blacks of North Queensland are, without exception, the lowest type of humanity on the face of the earth.

They are almost on a level with the brute creation. They are naturally very lazy, and it is only the pangs of hunger that induce them to make any exertion to procure food.

They are treacherous in the extreme; their principal occupation appears to consist in spearing the white man's cattle, and, when possible, the white man himself.

They are as dangerous as snakes in the grass, and, like them, should be trodden under foot.

They practise no cultivation of the soil, and are even too lazy to build houses to shelter them from the winds and heavy rains.

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They just throw two or three branches of trees together, and crawl underneath.

Like the pestilential fever before the advance of settlement and civilization, they have to retire. They are fast approaching extinction, and in a century hence, one of the race will be an admired curiosity, if his existence is not already a memory.

The Endeavour is a tortuous river, and navigable for vessels of three or four feet draught for over 20 miles, after which it becomes a narrow, shallow stream.

The banks are lined with mangrove trees; beyond is a beautiful scrub, backed by mountains, with the Pacific Ocean glistening in the distance.

It is a pretty river. Every few miles you come upon a settler's homestead smiling with cultivated fields and orchards, where all kinds of tropical fruits are grown, such as the mangot, granddilla, banana, pine-apple, lemons, oranges, pomegranates, paw-paws, etc. Small herds of cattle are to be seen grazing in the bush, and there is the lovely tropical bush itself, with its

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variegated colours, whose silence is broken only by the mournful cry of the curlew or the peculiar weird note of the mopawk.

When sunset approaches, the beauty and tranquillity of the scene are enhanced by the exquisite tints thrown on mountain, scrub and sea. There is no twilight here. It is dark immediately after the sun has set, so there is little time to drink in the glories of the departing day.

To a stranger, the township has a peculiar appearance. It consists mainly of one long straggling street, viz., Charlotte Street, and all the houses are wooden, with roofs of corrugated iron. This, to my mind, gives to the buildings a very ugly appearance, to say nothing of the great heat engendered thereby. The shops, or "stores" as they are called, are tumble-down poky affairs. The principal and best buildings are the hotels and public-houses, of which there are many—about one to every 100 inhabitants.

The town has a municipality and Mayor, who is elected once a year.

There is a police magistrate, who presides at the court, and who is generally looked upon as

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the leading man of the place, a police inspector and the usual Government officials, C. P. S., land agent, etc.

There are good wharves, under the control of the municipality, also a very good harbour; the channel is well-marked by buoys and two leading lights, as there are many sandbanks, and occasionally the sand silts up in the channel, but a few months' dredging soon puts things to rights.

Vessels drawing 16 feet, moor alongside the wharves, and as Cooktown is the principal port of call for the north, and for English and China mail steamers, the shipping is of considerable importance; in fact, take the shipping away from the place, and little remains.

The town came into existence in 1873, only 17 years ago, and so short a life explains its present condition.

Large gold discoveries were made in the Palmer district, about 150 miles up country, to which flocked thousands of miners, and from which millions of ounces of gold were extracted.

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This gave birth to Cooktown, as it was the nearest port to the diggings.

At that time there were only two or three tents in the place, but the Palmer diggings soon altered this state of affairs.

Wooden and iron buildings were hastily thrown up, teams of bullocks and pack-horses were all day long leaving for the Palmer district with heavy loadings of provisions, etc.

The rates of carriage were enormous, as much as £30 a ton being charged.

At times flour was dearer than gold.

This great activity and bustle gave to the town a tremendous impetus, the effects of which are still visible.

The Palmer diggings are now deserted, as they are said to be unworkable.

Of course many made their fortunes at the time of the great rush, and many likewise spent a fortune. Naturally, as in all great gold-fields, numbers were disappointed, lost what little they had, were unsuccessful, and left the place disgusted, swearing they would never attempt digging again.

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Talking of the vicissitudes of gold-digging, reminds me of the strange career of Frank Stubley, whom I met in Queensland.

He was one of fortune's favourites. He was a hardworking miner in a gold claim at Gympie, one of the most permanent reefing fields in Queensland. He was working on wages, receiving about £3 10s. per week, that being the usual rate of pay. He saved a few pounds and invested them in a small interest in the claim in which he worked, and in one or two adjoining. Fortune smiled on him. Everything he put into turned out trumps. His shares rose tremendously in value, and in a short time he developed from a working man into one of the wealthiest capitalists of the colony.

He, by pure luck, found himself possessed of the immense sum of a quarter of a million pounds sterling.

This, judiciously invested in Australia, meant an income of £20,000 per annum for life.

What did he do with his wealth? Did he invest it judiciously? Nothing of the kind. He determined to become a large landed proprietor,

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bought two or three great estates, turned squatter, and purchased a number of race-horses. He invited all his friends and old mates to champagne suppers, took unto himself a wife of extravagant habits, who was a great help to him in spending money, went before the electors of the district as a candidate for parliamentary honours, and was returned as member by an overwhelming majority. He took his seat in the house of representatives at Brisbane, where, of course, his expenses were still further increased. Everything for a time went merrily as a marriage bell, but the day of reckoning was drawing near, and in the short period of four years he had wasted his substance.

His land, race-horses, etc., were sold to pay his debts, and, from a large capitalist, he once more became a working man.

Some friends subscribed sufficient funds to carry him to the Croydon gold-field, which had recently "broken out" (1885).

There he determined once more to woo the fickle goddess of Fortune and, with his proverbial good luck, retrieve his lost fortunes. But

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fate decreed otherwise. I saw him on the day he left Cooktown by steamer for Normanton, *en route* to Croydon, wished him good-bye and good luck.

He arrived safely in Normanton, stayed there a couple of days, and with two or three of his mates started on the tramp to Croydon, 100 miles distant.

Poor Frank Stubley, however, never reached his destination, as, before he got half-way, he suddenly dropped down dead on the road, partly from the terrible heat of the sun and partly, no doubt, from drinking too heavily in Normanton.

Such was the sad end of a man who, owing to his many sterling qualities, was a general favourite. To him good fortune proved a curse instead of a blessing. "*Requiescat in Pace.*"

The production of gold in Queensland during the last five years has been greater than ever. This is owing partly to the discovery of new rich fields, partly to the better working of old ones, to which machinery has been applied, as,

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from the extension of railways, the rates of carriage have been considerably reduced.

The Croydon Gold Field "broke out" in 1885, and from all appearances is likely to prove permanent.

By far the most important mine yet discovered in Australia is the celebrated Mount Morgan, a few miles from Rockhampton.

It might well be called the mountain of gold. It is the richest gold mine in Australasia, and its resources are unlimited. It derives its name from the original discoverer, Mr. William Morgan of Rockhampton.

It would not be out of place here to give a short account of its origin.

A few years ago Mr. Morgan, a prospector, who was roaming over the country in search of minerals, happened to be travelling through a small selection of 640 acres owned by a workingman, who just managed to eke out a living on it, the land being very poor. The selector, an uneducated man and ignorant of geology, was busy carting stone in his wheelbarrow. Mr. Morgan, being of an observant nature, took up one or two

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pieces of it, examined them, and asked the owner where he had obtained them, and of what use the stuff was. He pointed out to him a hill where there were tons of the same material, and told him he was building a fence with it. After a few more inquiries, Mr. Morgan went on his way, taking with him a few specimens of the stone, which he sent for assay, and shortly afterwards wrote to the selector asking him what he would take for his property. He was only too glad to get rid of it, worthless as the land seemed.

So the upshot of it was that Mr. Morgan bought the holding for about £600. Had this man been an intelligent mineralogist he would not have parted with it for £60,000, as the sequel will prove. The stone, which he thought only fit for building walls, was very rich quartz. The hill, or mountain, was in fact a golden one.

The transfer was duly made, and Mr. Hall, the manager of the Queensland National Bank, Rockhampton, advanced the money required to carry on the mining works, in consideration of a share or interest, and at the present time both

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he and Mr. Morgan, together with several others interested, are millionaires. The mine is practically inexhaustible and the output returns are enormous. The further down they go, the richer the ore proves. The mine is now worked by a large and powerful company, the value of each £1 share being about £10. Whether Mr Morgan and his partners made the poor selector a handsome present I cannot say, but I believe they did, if not they ought to have done so. Of course such a rich prize provoked litigation, but Morgan's claim was too strong to be overthrown. The total value of the mine may be stated at £10,000,000.

It is without doubt the most extraordinary mine in all Australasia.

The country for miles round Cooktown is stanniferous. From the Annan River, four miles beyond Cooktown, as far as Herberton, the strata are continuous, with breaks here and there. The principal tin claims are at Mount Romeo and the Tableland, some 40 miles distant, and also in the Bloomfield. About three years ago I visited several of the claims at

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Mount Romeo, many of which were doing very well, turning out several tons a week. The tin assayed from 70 to 75 per cent. of pure ore, and at that time was worth about 18*s.* a unit. The standard is 70 per cent., and for every unit above 70 per cent. the value is threehalfpence per unit more, that is to say, the price of the standard being 18*s.* per unit, if it assays 71 per cent. it is worth 18*s.* 1½*d.* per unit, and so on. Some time after, owing to a syndicate in Paris having monopolized the supply and obtained control of the market, tin rose to an abnormal value. Whilst this fictitious value held, the tin miners made a little fortune, but suddenly the syndicate burst, tin dropped 50 per cent., and many were ruined. By degrees, however, it regained its normal value or thereabouts, and at the present time, with slight fluctuations, it stands at about £90 per ton of pure ore. The supply, too, of late (within the Cook district at least) has fallen considerably, though to make up for this several new lodes have been discovered and, if systematically worked, will no doubt turn out satisfactory to the promoters. Herberton is the

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principal tin-mining centre in Queensland, as it has many permanent lodes, whereas in the Cook district the claims are for the most part alluvial. A rich tin claim is quite as valuable as a rich gold claim. The "stream tin" is found in the beds or banks of streams or creeks, at a depth varying from a few inches to several feet. Box drains are placed in the creek, and the dirt is placed in them. A good sluice of water is constantly brought to bear on it, and a fork or spade is continually at work stamping it, to get rid of the loose stones and dirt. The heavy matter of course remains at the bottom of the sluice box, and is afterwards cleaned and put through two sieves and dried in the sun. It is then put in sacks, after which it is packed in flour bags ready for the packer and his mules to take away to the port of Cooktown, whence it is shipped by steamer to Sydney for sale. Of course a great quantity is sold on the field to the merchants and storekeepers of the town, who, in some instances, send their own teams of pack-horses to cart it away. They also supply the miners with provisions and all requisites, such as

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tools, and by their stores, erected on the field, often make a rattling good thing out of the tin-miner. The latter is proverbially a hard worker, and when he has made "a big cheque" he goes into town with his mates for a spell, and spends it "like a man," which means that he never sees daylight until all his hard-won earnings are in the till of the publican. He then returns to his claim a poorer, but seldom a wiser, man, as he will, in all probability, repeat the debauch a few months afterwards. It is no use talking to him about the virtue of thrift, and the follies of a spendthrift, as it is his idea of "life," and he would enjoy no other. He prefers to live modestly, and work hard for six months, and then to come into town and live at the rate of £1,000 a year for a fortnight. "*Chacun à son goût.*" It pleases him and hurts no one else, so why carp at him? Take him as a whole, he is a genial, good-hearted man, hail fellow, well met, rough in exterior, but true at heart. Though he knows how to swear and to drink, he is free from mean vices, and we must remember that he has never known refinement of manners or thought.

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I like his rough ways and his honest character, and I take him just as he is, with all his faults, which in many instances are but the cloak of hidden virtues.

* * * * *

Sugar growing has always been an important industry in Queensland, and was most profitable, but if the Government carry out their present intention of prohibiting the importation of Kanaka labour, the above industry will be crushed, and the immense capital sunk in mills and machinery will be irretrievably lost. In North Queensland the climate is very hot, and it is impossible for white men to work in the fields, cutting the cane, also the high rate of wages that would have to be paid them would take away most of the planter's profits. It must be borne in mind that the capital necessary to erect a sugar mill and plant, and to work a plantation properly, is very great, and naturally the planters expect to receive a fair return for their enormous outlay. Taking these facts into consideration, I consider the policy of the Government in prohibiting black labour to be suicidal and foolish. In the

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Cook District there are only two sugar plantations, the Weary Bay Company's and Messrs. Hislops' of Wyalla, both in the Bloomfield District. The Weary Bay has turned out some very high-class sugar, but has been unfortunate in its management. Twelve months ago it was closed, owing to some financial difficulty, but I heard that it was intended to work it again. The scenery on the Bloomfield River is superb. It is thoroughly tropical. Dense scrubs reach close to the bank's edge, and the bush is filled with the most beautiful orchids, which, when in full flower, is a sight never to be forgotten. The ferns, too, are many, and of varied species, and the clearings are covered with the succulent cane, and circling the plain stand precipitous mountains, notably Stuckey's Gap; whilst from a gentle rise can be seen, over the tops of the dense scrub, the broad and undulating bosom of the Pacific Ocean. These scrubs are rather dangerous in wet weather, as then the numerous creeks become flooded and are unfordable, and sometimes the traveller is unwillingly made a prisoner, or has to run the risk of crossing a

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swollen stream. Another danger is that of getting lost in the bush, which is a very simple matter, but a very difficult one to get out of. Many a good bushman even has been lost in the trackless forest, where his bones have suggested a terrible story of death by hunger or thirst. The bush has, indeed, furnished many a sad tale of woe. In some instances men have gone mad from despair, having given up all hope of extricating themselves from the trap.

Some years ago a great friend of mine, Bob S——n, went through some terrible experiences. He was a thoroughly experienced bushman and a well-educated man, and to listen to his thrilling yarns of peril and adventure by sea and by land was a never-ending source of pleasure. Of all the good fellows I have ever met, he was, without doubt, one of the most entertaining and pleasant of companions. The particular story to be related is this. He started with a small party of men, equipped with tents and all the necessary supplies of provisions, which were carried on pack-horses, on an expedition for the purpose of finding new country that would be

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suitable for carrying stock, *i.e.* cattle. They travelled about 400 miles west from Cooktown, pitched their camp and were fortunate in finding some good-looking country. Bob S——n went some distance away from the camp, and on returning in the evening, to his great astonishment found his friends had struck their tents and left. He now realized that he was deserted 400 miles from civilization, alone in the pathless bush, the home of wild and treacherous blacks, with nothing to protect him but a revolver, and without a morsel of food.

Fortunately he was an experienced bushman, and a plucky fellow to boot, or he would never have survived the awful ordeal. There was nothing else for it but to face the inevitable, so he started on his weary journey, often suffering the fearful pangs of hunger. Now and then he managed to get a few berries to eat, and water to drink, and so day after day, weak from privation, without a covering at night, save the trees overhead, he wearily jogged along. One morning at sunrise as he was descending a rise, to his dismay, about 50 yards beneath him, he saw a

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large camp of blacks. One of them had just risen, and was stretching himself immediately facing him. The black fellow was equally taken aback, but before he could recover from his surprise, Bob S——n, with two or three piercing shouts, rushed into the camp, firing his revolver. The blacks, evidently thinking that there was a large force behind, took to ignominious flight across the river. This plucky conduct saved him.

Some more days' suffering, and, on the eleventh day out, he sank to the ground faint and exhausted, unable to move. He was, although he knew it not, within a short distance of a cattle station, where, luckily, one of the stockmen, who was out riding, stumbled across him, brought him to the homestead, where he received every care and attention, and eventually quite recovered his health and strength.

Had he not been a strong and hardy man he would assuredly have perished.

* * * * *

On one occasion I, together with five others, left the port of Cooktown in a small cutter at

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midnight, for the purpose of fishing at D Reef. The night was fine, a fresh breeze had sprung up, and the boat sped merrily on her way Three of the party, however, succumbed to sea-sickness, which interfered greatly with the sport, and after remaining at anchor for some time without enticing any fish to leave their native element, we hoisted sail and ran for the harbour, about eight miles distant, to the great relief of the sick mariners. We then went for a cruise up the Endeavour River, landing on the right hand bank. The boat here grounded, and, as it would be impossible to get her off until the evening tide, I and two others of the party determined to leave the boat and work our way through the mangroves to St. Patrick's Creek, where we could hail a boat to ferry us across and take us on to Cooktown. But "*L'homme propose et le Dieu dispose*" was exemplified in this instance. We started without food or water, taking a single-barrelled gun in the event of meeting with any hostile or hungry natives. The fateful start was made at 1 p.m., and after tearing through the dense and sickly mangroves for

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some miles, with a burning sun overhead, and the miasma rising from the ground beneath, it was found impossible to break the barrier of mangroves which stood in front of us like a wall. After bruising our heads against the cruel trees, we retraced our steps, and after going some distance one of us ascended a tree to take bearings, when crash, crash, down came the tree with its living burden, who received a severe shaking, but was not much the worse for his mishap. After some more of this delightful travelling, with our hands and feet cut and bruised, and darkness beginning to creep round the horizon, we turned our backs on the fetid spot, and were fortunate in coming out upon a plain or flat, covered with grass and timber. Following this up we reached the river bank. Our thirst was burning. There was "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." It was quite salt. There was nothing else for it, but to lie down on the grass and resign ourselves to our fate. The night was clear and cool, the heavens above studded with countless stars, and a light breeze played in the trees. Occasionally might be

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heard the splash of an alligator as he glided from his slimy bed into the cold and gruesome river.

The river at this point is full of these saurian monsters, seeking whom they may devour. We did not light a fire, fearing lest the blacks, who favour this camp, might pay us an evening call, as on these occasions they are apt to be rather brusque in their manners. However, we boasted one gun. There is always a day as well as a night, so at last dawn appeared, looking with astonishment at the three recumbent figures on the grass, as if wondering what on earth had brought us to this lonely place. After breakfast, consisting of salt water and grass, we followed the river up for a couple of miles thinking we should obtain fresh water, but were doomed to disappointment. It was quite brackish. Returning to our camp, with our thirst now raging, we held a consultation, the result of which was that we decided to construct a raft, capable of holding the three of us, on which we could drift down the river, and effect a landing on the opposite bank, where a settler named A——

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lived. We had no appliances, so had to make the best shift we could. We humped some big logs, which we found on the flat, to the water's edge, placing them crosswise and lashing them together with our shirts and handkerchiefs torn into strips, and when finished the raft would only support one. D—— then bravely volunteered to navigate this craft down the river to A——'s, although, as I said before, the river here swarmed with alligators. We launched her a little after noon, wishing our comrade *bon voyage*. Some hours afterwards we heard a shot fired in the scrub some distance off, which we returned, and after numerous interchanges of shots, a sergeant of police, with a couple of black trackers, appeared on the scene, armed with a bottle of brandy in one hand, and a bottle of water in the other. We hastily emptied the contents of the latter, and did not neglect the former. We then accompanied the police through the mangroves, to the creek where they had moored their boat, and started for home. Our plucky mate had already reached his destination in safety, having had

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to walk barefoot six miles into town, had got a boat, and gone up the river to rescue us. We went up the river to overtake him if possible, and eventually we all met together at A——'s, where our jaded frames were regaled with a substantial supper, after which we steered for home, reaching town a little after 10 p.m., to the delight of our friends, lovers and acquaintances. I will conclude by saying that it will be some time before I again attempt to navigate my way through mangrove swamps, unless well provided with the necessaries of life.

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CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE.

IN the year 1887, two months after the adventure spoken of in the previous pages, hearing that Captain Matheson was in port, and that he intended sailing for New Guinea in a few days, I went on board his schooner; and knowing him to be an able seaman and a jolly good fellow, I decided to go with him in his vessel, the *Spitfire*. The *Spitfire* is a strongly built "fore and aft" schooner of 35 tons net register. Besides this he had two small vessels, a cutter and a lugger, the former in charge of a South Sea Islander, and the latter in charge of a Queensland black. These comprised the entire fleet. The crew of the schooner was made up of the captain, the mate (a white man), a South Sea Islander, who acted as quartermaster, a cook (also a white man), about 20 Queensland blacks, including three women, and myself, the solitary passenger.

I put my traps—which were not many, as, like the Romans, I prefer to travel free of "impedi-

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menta"—on board, as I expected to make a start on the following day. There was some delay, owing to the Customs authorities, so we had to remain another day in port. I occupied my spare time in bidding good-bye to many of my friends and comrades, and they took leave of me as if they would never see me in the flesh again, as so many had lately lost the number of their mess in New Guinea. At last, to my great relief, the partings were over, for saying good-bye in Northern Queensland is a very serious affair, as everyone is bent on drinking your health, so with a slight headache, in company with the skipper, I stepped into the dinghy which was in waiting for us at No. 1 wharf. We were rapidly rowed by two of the crew to the schooner, which was moored to the buoy off the Pilot Jetty, anxiously waiting to slip her cable.

Everything was made ready for a start, the "fore and aft" sails hoisted, when Mr. W——, a friend of mine, and the chief officer of Customs, boarded us, had a parting glass, wished us a safe voyage, and then left for the shore.

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Soon after their departure, a breeze having sprung up, the order was given to hoist the head sails, we cast off our moorings, took a last look at the town where I had spent many a happy day, and commenced our voyage to the land of cannibals and savages.

The clouds were dark and lowering, Mount Cook looked angry, and everything presaged a blow. The wind was dead ahead, but the expected blow did not come off. We were not long rounding Cape Bedford, twelve miles to the N.E., but, as the day was well advanced, we knew that with the present wind we should be unable to get through the great Barrier before dark. We therefore determined to anchor at a sandbank, for to attempt to make the passage through the "Lark" opening in the dark would be the height of madness, as the passage is very narrow, and from the sandbank to the Barrier is one mass of coral reefs. We managed to reach our anchorage by sundown, and enjoyed what sailors call a "Farmer's" night. We had no work to do, as our two small craft were safe at anchor close to us. We

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spent the evening at a quiet game of cards (there being just four of us, the skipper, mate, cook and I) and in spinning yarns. Then, after a night-cap of rum, we turned into our bunks until daylight should appear. The captain, a Scotchman, was one of the most generous-hearted, upright men that I have ever come across, and every inch a sailor. The mate, too, was a first-rate fellow, and had been to New Guinea on a fishing cruise some years before; the cook, who hailed from the land of the shamrock, was full of fun, and an excellent comic singer, but a little too fond of the rum bottle; whilst I had the distinction of being the only passenger. Captain Matheson had already made a trip to New Guinea.

On this occasion he left his mate with some of the crew — blacks of Queensland — on an island, to superintend the curing of fish (Bêche-de-mer) and went to an island further away. On his return he found that his mate had been cruelly murdered that very day, only a few hours previous to his arrival. He immediately went ashore, surrounded the men, and with some difficulty captured four of the ringleaders

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and brought them in his schooner to Cooktown, where they were afterwards tried and, I regret to say, discharged, notwithstanding that one of them openly declared that he had killed the murdered man.

We were upon deck at daylight, weighed anchor, and steered our course for the Barrier. After a good deal of tacking, the wind being still ahead, we entered the "Lark" passage, and after beating about for several hours, just managed to clear it before dark, otherwise we should have been obliged to "'bout" ship and anchor inside for the night.

The Great Queensland Barrier Reef is a wonderful sight. It extends for several hundred miles, with narrow openings here and there, and at low tide the upper part of it is quite bare.

From the deck of a vessel, with the sun shining on it the white coral sparkles like crystal, and you cannot but marvel at the wonderful industry and workmanship of the countless millions of insects that have built up this gigantic sea-wall. Numerous vessels come

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here for the purpose of obtaining the valuable Bêche-de-mer, whose habitat is on this Barrier. We were now properly out at sea, as we had entered the Pacific Ocean, with its long sweeping roll. The sea was not very rough, but being the first night out I felt a little qualmish. It soon passed away, however, and I settled down to a life on the ocean wave.

We made good way, steering a direct course for the S.E. end of the Osprey Reef, which lies in mid-ocean, about 80 miles from the Barrier. It is 15 miles long, and woe betide the vessel that is stranded there, as she would speedily break up. It is a most dangerous reef, and not very well surveyed. In the year 1886, the steamer *Papua*, belonging to the German New Guinea Company, and laden with a heavy cargo, ran foul of it on the N.E. end, and soon became a total wreck, but all the crew managed to escape in the whale boats, nothing being saved except a few compasses.

The next day, owing to the wind being unfavourable, our run was a very poor one. We took the sun at 8 a.m., and at 12 noon, when

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I spent some of my time in trying to work out our position. I covered several sheets of foolscap with figures, but even then I did not come out right. What with cards, spinning yarns, and taking a turn at steering, the time passed rapidly away, and ere I was aware of it, supper was announced. The weather being very mild, for we were getting into warmer latitudes, we had all our meals on deck. Having finished supper, comprising the inevitable dry hash, we filled our pipes, and under the soothing influence of a tropical night, free from all care and trouble, lent ourselves to the enjoyment of the hour. There is nothing to my mind more intoxicating than being on a well-found vessel, with a spanking breeze, surrounded by the boundless ocean, and enjoying the companionship of jovial fellows. I turned into my bunk after the customary night-cap of rum, and soon fell asleep. "To sleep, perchance to dream." Dream I did, and the dream with its attendant circumstances was one of the most curious coincidences that has ever happened to me.

I dreamt that I was on the top of a high cliff.

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I had an album with me, which I threw over the cliff to the ground beneath. I tried to find a good way to descend, and at one part I noticed a rudely-constructed ladder attached to the top of the cliff, and reaching nearly to the ground. I stepped on to the ladder, intending to descend, but, not liking the look of it, stepped back, walked a short distance along the cliff, when my dream came to an abrupt end. I still slept on, not awaking until 7 a.m., in time for my cup of coffee. The dream was vivid, and in the morning the impression of it was as clear as on the night before.

Now for the coincidence.

I afterwards learned that at 2 a.m., still asleep, I had risen from my bunk, gone up on deck, strode over a seaman's chest, and walked along the deck until I reached the ratlins, then stepped on to them and was about to jump into the sea. Something or other stopped me, I then walked along the deck the same way I had come, stepped down to the cabin and lay down on my bunk. The captain, who slept on deck, noticed me coming up, but never thought

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for a moment that I was asleep, or he would have followed me. I have never practised somnambulism before or since. It is very strange, but not the less true, that anyone walking in his sleep seldom comes to harm. How is this I wonder? We had a good laugh over my adventure, which I put down to the rum and a disordered stomach.

The following night, about 10 p.m., the moon shining bright, we calculated that we ought to be somewhere near the Osprey Reef, when suddenly the mate, who was forward, sung out, "Breakers ahead!" It is anything but a welcome cry. The captain, fearing that we might be out of our course and dangerously near the dreaded Osprey, flew to the tiller, quickly put the helm hard down, and put the ship about. It turned out to be an hallucination. The moon shining on the sea gave it the appearance of broken water. The scare was soon over, and we went on our way rejoicing. We did not sight the Osprey Reef, but must have passed about 10 miles to windward of it. We had several days' calms, the sun burning

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like fire. It was almost impossible to find a shady spot. Down below it was very close, and upon deck very hot. We had a succession of head winds, which greatly retarded our progress. So the days went by until, on the morning of the ninth day out, we sighted the shores of New Guinea. We were 40 miles from Orangerie Bay, with its mountains of Alpine height towering away in the distance. What a relief to sight land after tossing for days on the ocean! By evening we were within a stone's throw of the mainland. The coast here is most interesting, very bold and broken, range after range of mountains covered with scrub, and here and there picturesque grassy islands, making a pleasant contrast to the dark foliage of the mainland bush. We had a long beat before us, as we were a good deal to leeward of our destination. We kept well within sight of land the whole way from this point, of which I was very glad, as it gave me an opportunity of observing the coastal formation. Every now and then we hove the schooner to, in order to enable our convoy, the lugger, to come up with

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us, when we filled up their water-casks and replenished their stock of provisions. The cutter had disappeared, and we did not see her again until we came to our anchorage in China Straits. We were not very anxious about her, as the South Sea Islander in charge was an experienced hand in a boat, and was sure to turn up some time or other.

The next day we passed close to the Brumer Islands (native name "Banaroa"). We did not stop, although Capt. Matheson wanted to get a number of the natives to go with him on a fishing cruise to the East End. The cutter, however, touched there and was successful in obtaining about 15 natives. The Banaroa people are good workers and of a friendly disposition.

This group of islands lies about 10 miles from the mainland, and they are very beautiful. There are most fertile plantations of yams, bananas, and coco-nuts, with here and there a bright patch of green. I should think that these islands would be very healthy, as they are free from swamps and not too much covered with scrub.

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I was very much pleased with their appearance, and should not object to a prolonged residence on them.

As darkness set in the Brumers had been left many miles astern. When within a few miles of Heath Island (Loger), which is a boundary of China Straits, to our disgust the wind entirely died away, and we were left to loll and roll about all night. We seemed destined never to reach port. This was the eleventh day of a voyage (in a straight course) of 430 miles.

The day previous we passed close to the schooner *Harrier*, in full sail with a fair wind, bound for Queensland. We saluted and exchanged compliments. Having passed a restless night, we once more steered for China Straits. When off the north-western point of Heath Island (Loger) we were boarded by two or three canoes, filled with natives, their faces painted in various colours, and all having large mops of hair on their heads. They wore no clothing save a banana leaf round the loins. This was my first introduction to the Papuan race, and I must confess that they had a most

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diabolical appearance. Several of them came on board, where they kept up an incessant chatter.

The passage between Heath Island and the mainland, known as the Western Passage, is rather narrow. Coral reefs extend a good distance out, so that it is necessary to hug the shore of Heath Island. The tide too is very swift here, rushing at the rate of five to six miles an hour, making it impossible to stem it without the aid of a strong breeze. Everything has an end, so at last we rounded the point of Heath Island and entered the charming and romantic harbour of China Straits.

We dropped our mud-hook just about sun-down in ten fathoms of water on the lee side of the Island of Samarai, having been 12 long days on the voyage.

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CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT.

BEFORE setting foot on Samarai I may as well give you some idea of the extent of New Guinea, and of how a portion of it became a British possession.

Looking upon Australia as a vast continent, New Guinea, or as it is sometimes called "Papua," is the largest island in the world, having a total length of 1,500 miles by 450 at its widest part. It has an area of 310,000 square miles or more than twice the size of the United Kingdom. The coast runs as nearly as possible W. N.W., and E. S.E.

Although New Guinea is in close proximity to Queensland, being only 400 miles distant from the port of Cooktown, until recently little was known about it, and even at the present time our information is very scanty.

It might well be called the "Dark Continent," as no white man has, as yet, crossed it. The

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coast for a considerable distance is fairly, but not completely, well-known.

In 1873, Captain Moresby, in H.M.S. *Basilisk*, sailed round the islands and along part of the coast, naming numerous islands after the ship and her officers. He discovered the splendid harbours of China Straits on the South East, and Port Moresby ("Hanuabada") on the South Coast, which latter is at the present time the headquarters of the London Missionary Society and of the Government. He also made a flying survey, which was of necessity far from correct, but which proved of great service to later surveyors.

In the year 1883 Sir Thomas McIlwraith, then Premier of Queensland, on behalf of his Government, annexed the whole of New Guinea, thus hoping to exclude the Germans. He had previously urged the Home Government to do this, but they remained inactive. Upon learning what had been done, the Home authorities emphatically refused to sanction it, but in the following year, 1884, on their own behalf established a Protectorate over that portion

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extending from latitude 5 to 10½° S. and longitude 141 to 151° E., comprising 89,000 square miles, the Germans having occupied the territory to the North, containing 71,000 square miles, whilst the Dutch territory, which lies to the N.W., and has been held by them for upwards of 25 years, contains 150,000 square miles; an area equal to the British and German portions combined. The Proclamation took place on the 6th of November 1884, at Port Moresby, where the British flag was hoisted and the British men-of-war, five in number, saluted.

The formal declaration was then read in the following terms:—

"To all to whom these presents shall come greeting:— Whereas, it has become essential for the lives and properties of the native inhabitants of New Guinea, and for the purpose of preventing the occupation of portions of that country by persons whose proceedings, unsanctioned by any lawful authority, might tend to injustice, strife and bloodshed, and who, under the pretence of legitimate trade and intercourse might endanger the liberties, and possess

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themselves of the lands, of such native inhabitants, that a British protectorate should be established over a certain portion of such country, and the islands adjacent thereto; and whereas Her Majesty, having taken into her gracious consideration the urgent necessity of her protection to such inhabitants, has directed me to proclaim such protection in a formal manner, at this place, now I, James Elphinstone Erskine, Captain in the Royal Navy, and Commodore of the Australian Station, one of Her Majesty's naval âides-de-camp, do hereby, in the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty, declare and proclaim the establishment of such protectorate over such portions of the coast and the adjacent islands as are more particularly described in the schedule hereunto annexed, and I hereby proclaim and declare that no acquisition of land, whensoever or howsoever acquired, within the limits of the protectorate hereby established, will be recognized by Her Majesty; and I do hereby, on behalf of Her Majesty, command and enjoin all persons whom it may concern to take notice of this proclamation:

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"SCHEDULE.

"All that portion of the southern shores of New Guinea, commencing from the boundary of that portion of the country claimed by the Government of the Netherlands on the 141st meridian of east longitude to East Cape, with all the islands adjacent thereto south of East Cape to Kosmann Island inclusive, together with the islands in the Goschen Straits.

"Given on board Her Majesty's ship *Nelson* at the harbour of Port Moresby on the 6th day of November, 1884."

Sir Peter Scratchley, a distinguished military officer, was appointed special commissioner. He chartered the steamer *Governor Blackall*, and with a large staff visited his new district, travelling along the coast for a considerable distance, touching here and there and interviewing several of the native chiefs. His term of office was, however, fated to be a short one, as in three months after his appointment, when off Mitre Rock, which is the extreme northern boundary, he contracted the dreaded malaria. He immediately ordered the steamer to return

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to Queensland, and the day after the vessel left Cooktown, died on board. The Hon. John Douglas, resident magistrate of Thursday Island, was appointed his successor, and ruled quietly and unobtrusively for over three years.

The country, meanwhile, was not developed in any way; the expenses of the Protectorate were considerable, when, as luck would have it, payable gold was discovered in July, 1888, on Sud-Est, an island in the Louisiade Archipelago (British New Guinea). Hereby hangs a tale, of which I shall speak in another chapter.

This discovery caused the Home Government to create New Guinea a British possession, which was declared at Port Moresby on September 6th, 1888, and an administrator, now Sir Wm. Macgregor, was appointed. A high tariff was at once imposed on all imports, which revenue came as a godsend to the impoverished state of the New Guinea funds. Such is a brief outline of our early administration of the country.

* * * * *

Early the next morning, having said good-

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bye to the genial skipper of the *Spitfire*, I took myself and belongings on shore, as I intended to make Samarai my headquarters.

Samarai is a small but picturesque island containing about 60 acres, situated in China Straits, which is the loveliest and most romantic-looking harbour I have ever seen. The island has a beautiful grove of coco-nut trees, with curious-looking hills on the S.E. or weather side. They look as if they had at some period subsided, leaving their tops only visible.

There is a fine coral beach running along the north-west or lee side of the island and facing the mainland, one and a half miles distant. There is a swamp of seven acres in the middle, the home of malarial fever, thus making this island one of the most unhealthy spots in New Guinea. A government agent is located there and has charge of the customs. In the time of the Protectorate, a large wooden bungalow was built on the top of the highest hill by Rooney & Co., of Townsville, costing the sum of £900. About 60 natives lived on the island, which had been their home for many years. In August,

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1888, just previous to the acquisition of New Guinea as a British possession, they were all driven away, or euphemistically got notice to quit. In lieu thereof, they were offered the island of "Quato," situated in China Straits, which had been purchased from the natives by the Protectorate some time previous. The natives were naturally incensed at being thus rudely driven from their island home, where they had lived for so many years, and refused to emigrate to "Quato." Some went to their friends at Heath Island (Loger), some to "Sariba," in China Straits. I consider their case a hard one, and the act of the Government unwarrantable. What on earth did the Government require "Samarai" as a station for when they had the choice of islands in the immediate vicinity, in the same harbour, islands far healthier, with good anchorages, well sheltered, and with no natives, or may be only one or two, living on them?

Why, for instance, did they not select "Quato," which belonged to them and is far healthier, or Coast Island, which is free from

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swamps and has an excellent anchorage, perfectly sheltered and close to the mainland? Verily the ways of a Government are inscrutable! As it is, they engender bitterness and hatred in the breasts of the evicted natives, the very thing they should study to avoid.

From conversations I have had with several of the natives on the subject, I find that they feel very sore on the matter. They will never forget it, and would retaliate, but know that they are powerless to act.

How would a European feel if he were suddenly driven away from his homestead, where his parents had died and his children been born, for no other reason than that some foreigner required it, and by way of compensation offered to him an alien piece of land, where he would have to rebuild his houses and make fresh plantations? It must not be forgotten that savages have as much love for their bit of ground as the proudest aristocrat in England has for his lordly acres. I will give an instance of this mistaken policy. Two months after these evictions, two friends of mine and I

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had occasion to go on a vessel to the adjoining island of Sariba, in order to get our water casks filled. We landed in the dinghy, taking with us a couple of casks, and requested the natives to take them to the creek and fill them. Before doing so, they had a talk amongst themselves, when we overheard them say, "Why should we do anything for the white men when we have been treated in such a shameful manner?" However, some of them said, "Well, these we have known some time, and they have always been friendly to us, have never done us any harm, let us not be ungrateful, but fill their water casks," and so they did. We made no remark, paid them in tobacco and got our casks on board, but it showed us very plainly the effect of the foolish policy of the Government. Had we not been on good terms with these natives, we should have had to go elsewhere for our water.

To represent the beauties of China Straits in keeping with its surroundings, requires the brush of an artist or the language of a poet. Although I am unable to do justice to it, I will

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attempt to bring the scene before the mind of the reader. There are four passages to the harbour, one on the east, west, south-east, and north-west respectively. The main coast is bold and rugged in outline, with a series of high ranges covered with dense scrub, with here and there the face of a hill cleared by the natives for yam cultivation. The shore is lined with coco-nut palms, native houses peeping between the trees. Between the steep and lofty mountains small creeks work their way. A coral reef extends some distance from the shore, making it impossible to anchor close in, as you have the full force of the south-east trade winds, save abreast of a creek opposite Coast Island, the mouth of which is almost hidden by mangrove bushes. On the western side the harbour is protected by the island of "Loger," a large island, thickly populated, running south-east and north-west, and extending to within a mile of the mainland. Close to "Loger" is the island of Quato of 200 acres, for the most part flat, but with rising ground to the south-east. There is a good channel between these islands where

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vessels of any tonnage could anchor, but a little exposed to the south-east winds. On the eastern side is the Island of Sariba, strikingly picturesque. On it rises a very high hill with a conical summit and covered with patches of long grass. There are numerous villages, and the natives living here are first-rate workers in clearing scrub and building houses. The south-eastern side is bounded by the Island of Samarai, so that the harbour is enclosed, as it were, by four walls. There is plenty of deep water all over the harbour, and vessels of any draught are able to anchor within a hundred yards of the shore. There is a small island in the middle of the harbour, known as Middle Island, and close to the coast is Coast Island, both covered with the coco palm and very fertile. In the far distance, to the north-east, 50 miles away, the lofty mountains of Normanby Island ("Duau") are visible, and on a clear day they appear quite close; when this is so, you may expect the wind from the north-east. Opposite Coast Island a creek runs for about a mile inland, where there is a small village. The

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creek is navigable for small boats only. The land beyond the village is thickly timbered and of good quality, and in my opinion would be suitable for cultivation. The rainfall, however, is very great, owing to the numerous ranges of hills in the neighbourhood. The harbour extends for five miles as far as South Foreland, after rounding which you enter the splendid bay named Milne Bay. I have seen the Harbour of Sydney and also of Cork, but whether its own beauty is considered or its environment of mountain, hill, dale and sea, dotted with the most romantic-looking coral isles, China Straits must take the palm. No artist could paint it in nature's colours. The scene is ideal. The purple haze of the distant mountains, the delicate blendings of colour in the tropical bush, the bright coral sparkling in the sun, the sombre colour of the natives, all are in perfect harmony, and notwithstanding the rugged appearance of the coast the whole scene inspires a deep sense of rest. I have so often, in company with my pipe, sat on my verandah in the silvery moonlight and gazed on that picture of tropical peace

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and plenty, that the impressions of it are indelibly imprinted on my memory.

I took up my abode with a trader named K——, who had been settled in the district nearly two years. As the house in which we lived was very hot, and by no means healthy, the idea suggested itself to us to build a native house in the sea. In some parts of New Guinea, as at "Hula," for instance, on the south coast, the whole town is built in the sea as a safeguard against their enemies, the bush tribes, of whom the coastal natives are in mortal dread. Having decided to emulate their example, we interviewed two chiefs of Sariba, Peter and Silliweddo.

We told them that we required a native house built in the sea, instructed them to get plenty of natives and start the work at once. Before going further we had to settle the price that was to be paid. The house, I may say, cost about £4 10s., paid for in articles of "trade." The two chiefs received a little more than the labourers and did not work, merely superintend-

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ing the erection, that is to say, smoked clay pipes and chewed betel-nuts. As a proof of the native intelligence, the following facts will speak for themselves:

I drew on the beach a rough ground-plan of the house, showing the length and breadth, the divisions of rooms and the two verandahs. Peter, the native chief of Sariba, who was present, measured the plan with a piece of cane, marking the length and breadth, rolled it up and put it in his "pocket"—I mean in his "dilly-bag"—for of course natives are not provided with pockets. He went home to his island, and in a few days came back with several large canoes with all the necessary logs, timber, &c., lashed to them, also the sago palm-leaves for the roofing, cane for splitting into laths, and when the house was finished there was very little material left. How he managed to calculate it so nicely I cannot say, but of course he had had considerable experience in building native houses. The roof of our house was loftier than the ordinary native one, but built of the same material. There was not a single nail

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used in the building. It was built in the sea in about four feet of water at low tide on the sea side, and on the shore side connected with the beach by a gangway. They have a curious way of driving the piles. We gave them a rope, which they fixed round the head of the pile, leaving two ends dangling. Several natives get hold of one end and several of the other, pulling alternately, until the pile is worked down to the required depth. The piles are made of white mangrove—a strong wood, and not too heavy. In order to prevent the ravages of the cobra insect, which in salt water will work its way into blood-wood even, it is best to tar the piles well, and better still—though very expensive—to copper them all over. The flooring is made of "matu," a kind of cane which is plentiful on the mainland, the walls of the bark or skin of the palm, and the roof of the leaves of the sago palm, which have to be put on separately, the leaves over-lapping a little, and on the outside some branches of the cocoa-nut palm are placed. A house of this kind is quite rain-proof, and if well-constructed will

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keep in good condition for at least two years. For health and coolness, a house built of native material cannot be beaten, and it has the additional advantage of cheapness.

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CHAPTER III.

NATIVE CUSTOMS.

THERE are three types of natives, Malay, Papuan, and Polynesian, each more or less mixed with the others. The word "Papuan" is derived from the Malay "Pua-Pua," or "Papuas," which, translated, means frizzle-haired. The distinguishing characteristic of the true "Papuan" is his frizzled hair, which, strange to say, grows naturally in small tufts. So far as I am aware no other race has this strange peculiarity. The "Papuan" is also much darker and fiercer than the others, and has thickish lips and rather a broad, flat nose. The "Polynesian" is by far the most intelligent of the three races. He has, moreover, fine, clear-cut, aquiline features, and is more amenable to the influences of civilization.

Now it is a very difficult matter to determine whence the Papuans of New Guinea originally came. If I may hazard the opinion, I should

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say they originally hailed from the continent of Asia. My reasons for thinking so are, *firstly*, tribes of the Papuan or Oriental Negro are found in the interior or mountain fastnesses of the Philippine Islands, in the islands of Flores and Borneo (Malay Archipelago), in the Malay Peninsula (at the foot of Siam), in the Andaman Islands (Bay of Bengal), and also in Cochin China; *secondly*, during several months of the year the wind blows from the north-west, and under the influence of these winds the current would flow in a direction by which it would be quite feasible for numbers of Papuans to travel in canoes by way of the Malay Archipelago as far as New Guinea.

In the strict sense of the term the Papuans are without any form of religion, but at the same time have certain beliefs in the supernatural. When one of their tribe dies they believe that his spirit tenants his former home, and if he be a "Taubada," that is to say a person of importance, a neat fence is erected round his grave. Quantities of yams, taro, betel-nut, and sometimes his native tomahawks, shield, &c.,

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are then placed within the enclosure, which is held sacred or "Tabu." Should he perchance die in Queensland, his spirit will not return to his birthplace, but will, according to their belief, be lost; the natives therefore will be wild, and will in all probability kill the first white man they come across, as an equivalent. If, however, payment be made to the relatives of the deceased the natives will be satisfied, and nothing more will be heard of it.

They do not possess any temples of worship, but have wooden idols or gods with which they decorate their houses; however, I have never seen them fall down and worship them, nor, as far as I know, is it their practice to do so. They believe in all sorts of "Devils" whom it is necessary to propitiate, but strange to say they have no idea of any beneficent spirits working for their good. I was present at several funerals or wakes, all of them being of women. When a woman dies beautiful wreaths of wild flowers are placed on the corpse, which is laid on the knees of two of her nearest relatives in the house. Her friends gather round, and weep and wail

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all night long, making the darkness hideous with their groans, but some of them feel real grief at their loss. At sunrise a canoe is in waiting, which conveys the body to her native place, which may be an island a few miles away. There it is decently interred, with more weeping, and all is over. Their method of going into mourning is very similar to our own. We wear black clothes, whilst they paint themselves black all over like Christy Minstrels, so that it is difficult to recognize them, their natural colour being a nutty brown. The period of mourning generally lasts about two months, and it looks very comical when the mourning is getting washed out. In some parts of New Guinea the women wear a net over their shoulders and breasts as a token of mourning, but the general custom is to dye themselves black. With all their savagery their different customs resemble many of our civilized ones.

Marriage.—They have no priests to perform this ceremony. When a man has reached a marriageable age, say twenty, he looks out for a wife. He selects a girl to his fancy, but has

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invariably to wait a long time before the marriage takes place, and it is very often a difficult matter for a young man to obtain a wife at all. When the day of the marriage has arrived the young couple retire to the house which has been prepared for them, and are thenceforth looked upon by their relatives as man and wife.

They keep the marriage state as inviolate as Europeans do. On the wedding day they give a banquet to their friends, consisting of yams, bananas, betel-nut and the fatted pig, also presents to the bride's family, and, let us hope, live happily ever afterwards.

As a rule the natives have only one wife, but in some instances two.

The men do not talk much to the women, as they look upon themselves as warriors and the women as labourers. It must not be understood from this that the women are illtreated by them, on the contrary they have a large voice in domestic affairs, and occasionally lord it over their masters. It is not only in domestic affairs, but also in the affairs of state that their influence is felt. It is often the women who

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incite the men to war, or to deeds of murder, rapine and plunder, and should they hesitate, they rush wildly into their midst, fling their arms about, and harangue them in the following fashion: "What, you are afraid to do this and yet you call yourselves men and warriors! Out upon you, you have not the hearts of men, you are more like a pack of old women; you ought to put on the grass petticoat, stop at home and do the cooking." The men thus wrought upon must needs obey, or quietly submit to the taunt of cowardice flung in their faces.

The above shows the position held by Papuan women to be anything but that of degraded slaves, as is so often the case in other savage countries. No, the women of New Guinea are determined to have their little say, and take very good care they are listened to.

The children are bright, cheerful, happier and more contented-looking than any I have ever seen. They are always at play, using the spear in sham warfare, with a piece of wood for a shield, or they busy themselves in fishing and

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swimming. Both men and women are always joking and laughing. Life seems to them one long holiday. All their wants, which are not many, are supplied by Dame Nature, their food, clothing, houses and weapons. One stick makes a man a spear, two sticks rubbed together a fire, fifty sticks tied together a house.

The boys are particularly bright and quick at learning anything, some of them picking up English readily, although they prefer speaking their own language.

All the women wear a grass petticoat, sometimes two, made from the palm, having two shades, intermixed brown and a whitish-yellow. It looks most picturesque. They also wear a black band, about three inches deep, round the arm just below the shoulder, and it is so tightly put on that when they wish to remove it they are obliged to cut it, which leaves an ugly mark in the flesh. The men wear simply a leaf of the coco-nut palm round the loins, with leglets, armlets and streamers or "wings" from the shoulders, if they wish to look extra well. They cultivate a tremendous shock of hair on their heads, comb-

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ing it out and dressing it with coco-nut oil several times a day. The combs are of their own manufacture, which, after using, they stick in their hair in much the same way as European ladies wear a comb. All the men have the lobe of the ear pierced, on the outer rim of which they string small shells like rings, also the cartilage of the nose is perforated, through which they thrust a long shell, well polished, and fined down to a sharp point, giving it at a distance the appearance of a moustache. Like the heathen Chinee, they are as beardless as boys. The women as a rule wear their hair straight and cut short, the part over the forehead a little frizzy. The married women tattoo themselves from head to foot in an ornamental and conventional design. The girls and men do not practise the art.

They live in villages, all the houses standing in a regular line, well built on blocks, 5 to 6 feet from the ground, the walls made of the sago palm, the leaves of which are put on separately and slightly overlapping one another. The floor is made of "matu" or cane, the face of

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the roof in the form of a triangle. They keep the ground in front of the houses very tidy, generally sweeping it once a day. The houses are surrounded by numbers of coco-nut trees, and by a curious and happy law of nature the nuts fall principally at night time; were it otherwise it would be very dangerous, as the coco-nut is anything but soft.

The women are employed in the yam and taro gardens, also in cooking and carrying fire-wood, besides looking after their babies.

The land is held by a family or tribe, and is divided and sub-divided, each household having a part portioned off, so that many natives are interested in one piece or parcel of land. Such land cannot be sold or parted with without the consent of all the principal owners. This system of land tenure works well until the family or tribe becomes so numerous that the different portions or lots are reduced to a very small area, causing some of the members to seek fresh districts.

Their national food consists of yams, taro, bananas, sago, coco-nuts, fish, birds, pigs, and

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occasionally human beings. Of course in some districts food is scarce, in others, there is a superabundance,

They commence digging up the yams about the end of April, and in May hold a great yam feast or festival, at which hundreds of natives are present, each of whom contributes pigs, yams, or something else. They think nothing of killing over 100 pigs on one day, and there are cart loads of yams and other food on the ground. They have a very curious method of dealing out the different parts of the pig. They cut up twine (which they make themselves) into various lengths, giving to each representative a length. Each length entitles the holder to a certain part of the pig, say, a holder of a short length receives the head, and so on.

All the girls are dressed in their best, which means a clean grass petticoat, with beautiful garlands of wild flowers round their heads and a necklace of beads encircling their throats. It looks lovely. The men paint their faces in the most gorgeous style, using different pigments, and vieing with each other as to who can look

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the ugliest. They are also decorated with bands and streamers, and in their own opinion are dressed in the height of fashion. After gorging themselves with food and coco-nut milk, the musicians strike up, using the "tom-tom" a kind of drum, and singing a New Guinea carol; the maidens dance round for hours in a ring, speeches are made by some of the leading men, and the amusement extends far into the night, only to begin again the next day. A feast of this description often lasts from a week to ten days, during which time business is at a stand-still, as they will not work at making "copra" or anything else until the feast is over. It is very similar in idea to our harvest feast in England. Should the yam season fail, which is not often, the natives suffer want, and have to live on sago and coco-nuts. As in most annual feasts the amount of food wasted is great. There is one very good quality about the yams, if stored in a house they will keep good for two years. They grow sometimes to a length of 4 to 5 feet and weigh very heavy.

The language is not unlike that of the Maories

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of New Zealand, and, like it, is made up of numerous dialects. When you reach the "Motu" district, say Port Moresby, the language decidedly changes and differs entirely from that of the south-east or east end.

It is not very difficult to acquire. If you mix with the natives, and take some interest in your task, you ought to be fairly proficient in twelve months, at least, this is true of the language spoken on the south-east coast, with which I am conversant. Like Italian, every word ends with a vowel. The vowels are pronounced, ah, eh, e, o, oo, *ai* as i, *au* as ow, and *r* at the beginning of a word, as L.

Their musical instruments are very primitive, but their singing is good, as they keep capital time, and have very fair voices. They are very fond of singing, their songs generally being an account of a canoe's journey, of how they got on, or about some fight that took place years ago, and occasionally about the only girl they ever loved.

They make incantations to the wind, as it is believed the winds are influenced thereby.

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The natives living on the south coast manufacture different kinds of pottery, such as cooking-pots, dishes, bowls, water-jugs, and the like. They are also very clever at making fishing-nets, mats, baskets, lime-bottles, and last, but not least, canoes. As we have our shipwrights, so they have special men who understand canoe-building. It is astonishing how well they make them, considering the rude tools they have to work with. They manufacture large quantities of sago. They do not, however, make it in a granulated form, but bake it into cakes, covering them with a frame of woven leaves, this being the handiest form for carrying it about with them in their canoes. When it is required for the "table" it is made up into small dumplings, placed in the pot and boiled. The process of manufacture is as follows:

They cut down the sago palm, and remove the crown with its huge fronds. A tall tree with a smooth white bark is selected, the bark split in a straight line from top to bottom, and stripped off in one piece. They then spread out the piece of bark flat on the ground along-

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side the sago trunk, covering it with the large green leaves of the wild plantain. The bark of the sago-palm is split into three or four long strips, reaching from end to end of the trunk, and the white pith is exposed the whole length of the tree. A number of women sit in front of the tree, each with an adze-shaped weapon made of bamboo, with which they chip out the pith, which falls in white flakes on the clean plantain leaves.

The pith is carried away in baskets made of plaited coco-nut leaves to the river or sea, as the case may be, where it is to be washed. It is then shot into a bin about six feet square, built of logs and lined with plantain leaves. A staging of poles is erected in the water and troughs made of the leaf stalks of the sago palm are fixed upon it. They are placed in a sloping position upon the staging, the larger ends uppermost. The sago pith is now put into the trough, into which is fixed a strainer made of that delicate textile that envelopes the unexpanded fronds of the coco-nut palm. It is washed with water and kneaded with the hands,

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while the water runs away in a milky stream, and the woody fibre and other solid particles are arrested by the strainer. The water runs out of the bottom of the trough, and is caught in a deep receptacle where the heavy sago sinks to the bottom in a form resembling white clay. Sago, manufactured in this way, will keep good for a considerable time.

When yams are scarce, the natives have to depend almost entirely on sago and coco-nuts.

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CHAPTER IV.

A STORMY TRIP.

A CHRISTMAS under a burning tropical sun, such as I spent in 1887, seems unnatural. What a contrast to a Christmas in England!

"Outside fall the snowflakes lightly,
Through the night loud raves the storm,
In my room the fire glows brightly,
And tis cosy, silent, warm.

"Musing sit I on the settle,
By the firelight's cheerful blaze,
Listening to the busy kettle
Humming long-forgotten lays."

In New Guinea you eat your Christmas dinner in the open air, with the thermometer at over 100° in the shade. All nature seems weighed down by the oppressive atmosphere. One feels too enervated for any exertion, beyond imbibing cool drinks or smoking a cigar in a cane lounge.

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About this time a fleet of pearl-shelling boats had come to New Guinea from Torres Strait, and were working in the Louisiade Archipelago. The water was rather too deep for them, as they had been accustomed to eight to ten fathoms. One or two of their divers were paralysed, and the whole of their fleet in a few months left for their old quarters, evidently having had enough of New Guinea waters. Not long after their departure one or two good patches of pearl-shell were found, which the New Guinea pearl divers took advantage of. It was fortunate for them, the Torres Strait fleet had already left the scene.

Just before Christmas Day, some of the Torres Strait boats had anchored in China Straits, remaining until after Christmas, so that we had a good muster of white men.

We held our Christmas festivities on the Island of Samarai. The dinner was tastefully laid out on rudely-constructed tables, set in the open air, under the canopy of Heaven. The tables were decorated with beautiful bouquets of wild flowers.

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The bill of fare was exhaustive of the delicacies procurable, and was as follows:

Soup—Real Turtle.
Fish—Kingfish.
Joints—Roast Lamb & Peas (Kid).
„ Roast Pork.
„ Cold Corned Beef.
Entrées—Turtle & Scalloped Oysters.
Sweets—Omelette, Fruit Pie.
Vegetables—Yams, Taro, Spinach.
Cheese.
Dessert—Bananas, Pineapples, Mangots, Pawpaws, Coco-nuts, Oranges, etc.
Wine & Spirits—Lager Beer, Whisky, Sherry, Port.

We had quite a representative gathering, consisting of captains, mates, traders, fishermen and divers—fifteen in all.

Several New Guinea natives, clad in their native garments, waited at table, and first-class waiters they are. Captain Runcie, of the S.S. *Gympie*, an old *habitué* of New Guinea, took the

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chair. Runcie Creek in the Island of St. Aignan was discovered by him.

After justice had been done to the different viands, speeches were made, some of unique character. Songs were then called for, and woe betide him who refused to sing. All the different nationalities were represented. We had Greek, English, Russian, Scotch, German, and New Guinea songs. The excitement was kept up until the small hours of the morning. Some of the feasters had some difficulty in the morning in finding their respective vessels. I must not forget to mention that we had a Chinese song by one "Ah Gim," a worthy member of that race, and a most respectable man. He has been engaged in the Bêche-de-mer fisheries, New Guinea, for the past ten years, and has had several hair-breadth escapes. I am not a lover of the Chinese race, but I must make an exception in favour of "Ah Gim." He is a first-rate fellow. I have known him for several years, and can testify to his upright and straightforward character. His headquarters are at Su-au (South Cape).

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At the end of January, 1888, I started in a small lugger, intending to go first to the Island of Wari (Teste), and then to Kitai (Basilaki Islands). I had four New Guinea natives and one South Sea Islander on board. The breeze was light, and before we got clear of the Eastern Passage it entirely died away. We were bemoaning our fate, when a light air sprang up, and I was congratulating myself on the prospect of reaching Wari (35 miles distant) that evening, when the wind, which was blowing from the south, increased to a gale. Our dinghy was being towed astern, and in our haste to get it on board, and from the force of the wind, the tow-rope somehow or other got adrift, and away went the dinghy, which was soon lost to sight. Our little craft was headed for Wari, but owing to the strength of the gale she was unable to face it, so we had to run before the wind under the jib only, steering our course for Kitai. After tearing along for several hours at racing speed, we dropped anchor off Kitai a little before dark, the wind still howling like an enraged beast. We soon turned into

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our bunks, glad to be safely secured from the tempest.

"Basilaki" is a large island about 15 miles from the main coast. The natives living on it are a bad lot. They have committed many murders both of natives and white men, and are the terror of the adjoining islands. In the morning a number of large canoes came alongside of us with a quantity of bags of copra, which I took on board. At noon, the sun shining fiercely, I determined to go on shore, so jumping into one of their big canoes, and taking my Winchester rifle, loaded with 13 rounds, and with a few spare cartridges in my pocket for I knew the treacherous nature of the natives in this part, I was duly landed on the beach.

A crowd of natives soon gathered round me, evidently taking a keen interest in my appearance. I was alone. I went a short distance into the bush, keeping a firm hold of my rifle. I then sat down and distributed a few small pieces of tobacco to the assembled multitude. Not liking the look of the people, and wishing to avoid an encounter, I thought it prudent to

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return to my little vessel. I jumped into one of their canoes and was soon on board, telling them at the same time that I purposed returning in a month or two, when I hoped they would have plenty of copra for me. The next day, the wind still blowing furiously, I decided to remain at anchor. I was successful in obtaining a few more bags of copra, and on the following morning left en route for Wari. The wind was blowing fresh from the south-east, and after a long beat through the lagoon, where we had anchored, to the open sea, we found the wind coming direct from Wari and dead in our teeth.

Had I been a native of New Guinea I should have accounted for the unfortunate circumstance by the interference of some evil spirit who had purposely and with malicious intent caused an unfavourable wind. Not, however, believing that I was the plaything of devils, I determined to make an effort by way of a dead beat to windward. The boat would not sail close to the wind. The tides here are terribly strong, running at the rate of five to six knots an hour.

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So that whatever progress we made in six hours we lost in the next six.

However it is a long lane that has no turning, so, after beating about for three days, a distance of only 20 miles, we made the north-west passage of the island.

Our troubles were by no means at an end. The night was pitch dark, so we were obliged to stand off and on until the rising of the moon, which did not appear until nearly midnight. It then shone brightly, and the island of Wari, a few hundred yards distant, stood out in bold relief, with Bell Rock on our right, so called from its likeness to a bell. It is a perpendicular rock, several hundred feet high, most precipitous, bare of cultivation, with the sea ceaselessly dashing against its serried side. The passage between Bell Rock and the island is a very narrow and intricate one, and most dangerous to navigate.

There is a large coral reef on either side, also several sunken rocks. I placed one of the natives, a boy belonging to Wari, who knew the locality, in the bows of the boat to act as pilot,

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and keep a sharp look-out. With the silvery moon lighting up our path, and a strong breeze from the south-east, we made the attempt, anxiously peering over the side with the unpleasant expectation of striking on a reef. Presently the boy who was keeping a look-out forward sang out, "'Bout ship," the helm was put hard down, and the next moment we were on the reef.

Oars were at once got out, but it was of no avail. Our vessel would not budge an inch. I sent a couple of natives to the island. They had to cross the reef, and by dint of swimming and wading reached the beach.

Numerous fires were blazing in the distance surrounded by numbers of the islanders. The boys were instructed to bring as many natives as they could muster, as I hoped by our united efforts we should be enabled to get the vessel off. About a dozen natives appeared on the scene, who evidently did not relish turning out at such an unearthly hour. We all worked with a will, and after a number of spasmodic efforts we got clear of the reef, only to get on

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another one a few minutes later. I suspended the certificate of the pilot for the next 12 months, and I am afraid to write the language which, on the occasion, seemed to me appropriate. There was nothing else for it but to drop the anchor on the reef and wait patiently until the morning. The sun rose in full splendour, showing us distinctly our unfortunate position. Here we were, within a mile or so of our anchorage, imprisoned between the reefs like a rat in a trap.

The wind had by this time increased, and the sea had got up. Our little craft was in considerable danger, as with a heavy wind and her sides beating against the hard coral, she stood a very good chance of breaking up, or having a hole knocked in her bottom. The wind blowing straight in our teeth, I determined to get the anchor on board, crowd all canvas, turn tail, and run, trusting by this means to get free of the reef.

I could then go to leeward of the island, and rounding the north-east end, pick up my anchorage in the passage which is on the south east or weather side.

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This was a roundabout way, but the only possible one. The anchorage is sheltered by a large coral reef which extends a long distance to windward.

Our anchor was safely stowed on board, all the sails set (a strong south-easter blowing astern), and the vessel gave a heave and got clear of the reef.

The start was made. No sooner, however, had we got away, and in deep water, than crack went the mainsail, blown into a thousand ribbons. Luckily we had a spare mainsail on board, belonging to another boat. We managed to set it in a fashion, and after many difficulties, circumnavigated the island and came to an anchorage on the other side just abreast of the Mission House, tired out with our unfortunate journey.

"Wari," or Teste Island, is situated about 35 miles to the south-east of Milne Bay, and as the trade wind blows from that quarter, it means a dead beat all the way.

The island is from two to three miles long by half a mile broad. It is most fertile, and from its position very healthy.

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There are numerous plantations of yams and bananas, also orange and lemon groves. There is unfortunately a scarcity of good water. A ridge of hills runs right through its centre from E.N.E. to W.S.W. There are three villages close together, having a population of about 400. The natives here are most intelligent, and make capital sailors.

One of them, by name "Dim-Dim," can sail a cutter as well as any white man, and what is still better, can be thoroughly trusted. The word "Dim-Dim" means "a white man," and as the native in question has all the good qualities of one he was so christened.

At the time of my visit to Wari I was the only white man on the island. The day after I landed I had an attack of fever, and what with sickness and the gale still holding, I had perforce to remain here for a week.

All the natives are passionately fond of chewing the betel-nut; they take with it lime, which they make by burning coral and then crushing it into a fine powder. It is carried in boxes made of coco-nut and beautifully carved. They

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also eat with it a leaf which is rather peppery but pleasant to the taste. The betel-nut grows luxuriantly in some districts, whilst in others there is none. Of course the constant chewing of it blackens the teeth, but that is fashionable and considered no blemish.

I visited the natives in their several villages, and was in every instance treated with the greatest hospitality.

Upon entering their houses a clean "dam" or mat was placed on the floor for me, betel-nut was brought which I had, *nolens volens*, to chew, though I must confess I do not relish the operation, and lastly the "bau-bau," a family pipe, was produced, at which I was supposed to take a draw or two, not forgetting to supply the ammunition for it from my stock of tobacco.

It is best to fall in with their ways as far as practicable, and by your acts to show them that you appreciate their demonstration of hospitality. It is in this way that you are able to gain their friendship and confidence.

Most of the natives living on the coast have

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acquired the habit of smoking, and very soon become inveterate at it. They would sell their souls for tobacco.

There are islands to the north of the mainland where tobacco is entirely unknown, but before many years are over it will reach them also.

The women are not heavy smokers, and are never to be seen with a clay pipe in their mouths. They prefer smoking the "bau-bau," a family pipe made of bamboo. It is a hollow piece of wood, three or four feet long, circular, with a big hole at one end and a small hole at the other. The tobacco is rolled in a pandanus leaf in the form of a cigarette, placed in the small hole and lighted, the smoke is then blown into the pipe and the tobacco removed. The first smoker, holding the pipe in both hands, takes two draws and passes it on to the next. The tobacco must then be inserted again and the process repeated.

When smoking the "bau-bau" they seat themselves in a circle. The pipe is always artistically carved, and is a great favourite with the women.

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Having lost our only dinghy, I purchased from the natives a canoe with an outrigger attached, capable of holding two persons. I had to pay one American hatchet for it. It came in very handy, as without it I should have been dependent on the natives for going ashore.

Some of their canoes here are very large, carrying a big mat sail made from the palm-tree, the seams well caulked and tarred. It is surprising how quickly they can travel, and how close to the wind they can go. They go out with them in all sorts of weather, and it is very seldom they get upset. The leading man in the canoe sits in the stern sheets and acts as helmsman.

He also gives the word of command. When it is time to make sail, he sings out in a loud voice, "Wai-wai, Wai-wai," and when the great sail has been hoisted to the peak, he calls out, "Besi" (that will do), the halyards and sheets are belayed, the sail is canted over, and away she scuds before the breeze.

The prows of their canoes are decorated with numbers of the white egg-shaped cowrie shell,

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and, like our own vessels, each canoe has a particular name.

The natives trade a good deal amongst themselves, in some instances taking sago in their large canoes a distance of 300 miles, bringing back in exchange yams, betel-nut, etc.

Having obtained several bags of Bêche-de-mer and copra, and stowed them safely on board, I took advantage of a light favourable wind and left for Samarai (China Straits).

After an uneventful passage of 18 hours I dropped the anchor a little after midnight.

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CHAPTER V.

A GOLDEN PROSPECT.

WHEN not engaged in trading operations I occasionally made excursions on the mainland, and at different times prospected several creeks, hoping to obtain traces of gold, but such hopes were not fulfilled. One of the creeks I followed had a formation identical with those on Sud-Est, where payable gold was found. The bed of this creek was composed of slate, with slate bars here and there. The banks sloped on either side. With more time to prosecute the search possibly the result would have been different.

Mr. Andrew Goldie, who has been in New Guinea about 14 years, is said to have discovered traces of gold many years ago, but nothing came of it.

Everyone held more or less the belief that gold existed in the country, but, strange to say, no one had taken much trouble to prove it.

One evening, towards the end of May, 1888,

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I was quietly reclining on a lounge, smoking my pipe and enjoying the beauties of a tropical night, when suddenly the door of my room was opened and eight stalwart men appeared out of the blackness of the night. I was taken quite by surprise, as I had not heard any vessel let go her anchor.

It turned out, however, that the cutter *Juanita* from Cooktown, with a party of eight diggers or prospectors, had arrived, with Mr. Whyte as leader. I knew Whyte and one or two of the others. Water diluted with a little whisky was at once produced, when numerous questions were eagerly asked and answered.

In answer to my query what was their object in coming to New Guinea, Mr. Whyte said that the party was organised by himself under the authority of the Hon. John Douglas, at that time "Special Commissioner" for British New Guinea under the "Protectorate."

Mr. Douglas had given them special powers and privileges to prospect for gold and other minerals over the whole of the territory under British protection. I may as well here state the

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causes that led to this sudden action on the part of Mr. Douglas.

Two months previously, David Whyte, who was engaged on a pearl-shelling boat in the Louisiade Archipelago (which is part and parcel of British New Guinea territory), and who, by the bye, was hard up at the time, informed Mr. Douglas that he had discovered an auriferous reef on Johannet Island, situated in the above named group, showing him specimens therefrom.

This information resulted in Mr. Douglas purchasing the *Juanita*, a cutter of seven to nine tons burthen, and provisioning it for a three months' cruise. Mr. Whyte found eight practical miners who were willing to go with him although they were well aware that he was not a miner. The adventurous party, who were loudly cheered on their departure from Cooktown, set sail on May 23rd, and arrived, as I have already stated, off the Island of Samarai on the evening of May 28th, 1888. The party stayed on the island for a couple of days in order to take in a fresh supply of wood and water before proceeding on their journey.

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Johannet Island lies 140 miles to the eastward of China Straits, which necessitates beating to windward nearly the whole of the distance. At the time of their arrival H—— and I were the only white men on Samarai, whilst there were as many as 250 natives, most of them visitors from different parts, some from Milne Bay, others from Tube-Tube (Engineer group), Basilaki, and various places. The resident natives only numbered about 50.

On May 31st I was strolling round the island with two or three of the "diggers," pointing out some of its beauties, when, near a large group of natives, I heard a buzz of angry voices. I immediately hastened to the spot anxious to find out the cause of the disturbance. Numbers of large canoes belonging to the native visitors were drawn up in regimental line on the beach. Hard by, in an open grove of beautiful cocopalms, about 100 natives belonging to Wagga-Wagga (Milne Bay) were drawn up in review order, opposite to them were 50 natives from Tube-Tube, one of the islands of the Engineer Group, ranged in double ranks in the position

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known as "ready to receive cavalry." A few moments before not an arm, not a spear, was to be seen. Now they appeared to have sprung from the ground, as all the warriors were suddenly armed with them. The spears had, in fact, been hidden in the canoes a few yards away.

Matters began to wear a serious aspect. Both parties had worked themselves into a most excited state. The attacking party, viz., the men from Wagga-Wagga, intent on crushing their foes, gradually drew nearer, each with his long and deadly spear poised, ready to lunge it in the breast of his antagonist, until they had advanced to within a few yards of their opponents. I expected every moment to see the spears, held in itching hands, hurled. I could not but admire the cool courage with which the Tube-Tube men awaited the onslaught, nothwithstanding the disparity of numbers. Each belligerent party hesitated.

However, I could plainly see that it was merely a question of time. In a few minutes, maybe, their feelings would get the better of their judgment and blood be spilt. Not know-

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ing what evil consequences might not result from such an ending, there being nearly 300 savages on the island, I hastily despatched a native boy named "Ginger" to a house a short distance away, telling him to bring back three or four Winchester rifles duly loaded. He returned in a few minutes with them. We armed ourselves and forced the Wagga-Wagga natives to retire, and leave the island in their canoes, thus averting unnecessary bloodshed. Had we not acted promptly, goodness knows where the fight would have ended. There was great excitement in the place for several hours afterwards, the wives and sweethearts of the men taking a lively interest in the events of the day. War was averted.

It seems, according to the Wagga-Wagga version, that one of the Tube-Tube men had stolen something from a Wagga-Wagga man. This the Tube-Tube natives denied, but it was evident that the two tribes were natural enemies, and that the quarrel was only got up through their hatred of one another.

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The weapons used in this part are the spear, stone hatchet, club, shield, and a small spear something like a dart. To the westward they have the spear, club, tomahawk, and bow and arrows.

They are wonderfully expert with the latter, being dead shots at a distance of 80 yards, the bow and arrow being much more dangerous to my mind than the spear. The bows are very large, strong, and beautifully made. They have also a horrible, murderous-looking weapon, called a man-catcher, which is used by them in their nefarious head-hunting expeditions. It is a large loop of rattan with a long handle of bamboo; at the bottom or foot of the loop a sharp spike about four inches in length is inserted. The loop is thrown over the head of the retreating victim, the sudden jerk causing the spike to enter the base of the skull, producing instant death; the head is then severed from the body and kept as an article of barter. You will often come across a number of skulls stuck in a ghastly row outside the houses. This, of course, is direct evidence of the wealth of the

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proprietor, as with them he can purchase anything he desires.

* * * * *

Having taken in a fresh supply of wood and water, the prospecting party left in the *Juanita* for Johannet Island, which they reached on June 10th.

Whyte was asked by the "diggers" to point out the golden reef that he had discovered. He showed them a "buck reef" (by which is meant a quartz reef not bearing gold), which never had carried gold and never would. In fact there was no trace of gold on the whole island. The outraged feelings of the diggers may be imagined; they were simply furious.

Fortunately, however, there was a larger island seven miles distant, viz., Sud-Est.

They went there, and on the second day after landing discovered traces of gold. Their spirits rose at once. They diligently followed them up, and in a little over two months obtained 150 ounces, of the value of £550. Mr. Douglas had stipulated that at the end of three months the boat was to be returned to the

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British New Guinea Government, which was accordingly done. I saw the members of the party in China Straits upon their return from Sud-Est. They reported that they had worked the field out and that it was very patchy. This report speedily reached Cooktown, setting it on fire, everyone believing that there were millions of ounces of the precious metal awaiting their grasp. A party of 26 diggers left Cooktown on August 14th, in the schooner *Griffin*, other sailing vessels following at short intervals.

This discovery caused the Home Government to create British New Guinea a "British Possession," which was declared at Port Moresby on September 6th, 1888, and an Administrator, now Sir William Macgregor, was appointed.

A high customs tariff was at once imposed on all imports, which revenue came as a relief to the impoverished state of the New Guinea funds.

Six or seven weeks after the above events, the cutter "*S——l*," 12 tons register, owned by a

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friend of mine, arrived from Cooktown. As my friend purposed going on to the Sud-Est Goldfield, I decided to go with him in his cutter.

They had a large cargo on board of dutiable goods, such as tobacco, general stores, etc.

Up to this time (September 30th, 1888) no word of the declaration had reached us from Port Moresby, nor any schedule of the tariff, which we took for granted would be imposed. The Government schooner *Hygeia*, with the Administrator on board, was hourly expected from the above-named port.

As most of the goods on board the "*S——l*" were under bond, we were anxious to reach Sud-Est before the arrival of the Government and get rid of a quantity before duties could be levied.

Having got everything ship-shape and still no sign of the *Hygeia*, Captain S——g went to the Government Agent at Samarai, Mr. Edelfelt, an ignorant foreigner, and asked him for his clearance for Sud-Est. The agent very impolitely refused to grant it, stating that, as the *Hygeia* was expected every moment, it would

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be necessary for us to pay duty on everything before we could obtain a clearance.

What an absurdity! Fancy paying duty before knowing what the duties were, or having had any official intimation of them! We distinctly refused to grant this request, and demanded our clearance, as our sails were all unfurled and everything ready for a start. We then went on board our cutter, telling the agent we would give him an hour to reconsider his decision.

In about an hour and a half we received a letter from him, in which he defied us to leave without a clearance, and stating that if we did so we should have to take the consequences. Seeing that nothing was to be gained by arguing with such a man,* orders were at once given to let go; the sails were hoisted and away we went without the coveted clearance, as we had lost quite enough time as it was. We touched at Sariba to take in water and left the same evening for Sud-Est. No sooner had we

* Mr. Edelfelt has since deemed it advisable to resign his appointment.

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got abreast of the Island of Doini (Blanchard), six miles distant, than the *Hygeia*, from Port Moresby, hove in sight, bound for Samarai.

She only stayed two hours in port, when she hurriedly left for Sud-Est. As she was a smart sailer, and of 60 to 70 tons burthen, she passed us during the following night, reaching Sud-Est two days in advance of us. The Administrator had, of course, been duly informed by the agent, Mr. Edelfelt, of our reprehensible conduct in leaving without his august sanction.

The trip to Sud-Est was most enjoyable, the weather being everything that could be desired. We kept inside the Long Reef, passing Teste Island on our right. We were never more than half a day out of sight of land.

We had to pass through a perfect network of reefs and islands—islands of tropical beauty, covered with succulent grasses, and smiling groves of palms bending beneath the weight of their luscious fruit.

Every now and then a large canoe, filled with dusky forms, would shoot out from an adjacent island and pay us a flying visit.

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We had a tow line astern with a hook covered with a piece of red and white calico, and every day we hauled up a couple of splendid fish, sometimes a king fish, at other times a sea salmon. We ate what we could and dried the remainder, cutting them into strips and hanging them in the rigging.

After passing Brooker Island, we entered the Sud-Est Barrier, and the next night anchored off Grassy Island, as just here the reefs are very numerous, making it unsafe to travel at night.

At daylight in the morning we were off again, and in the afternoon, when only three miles from the anchorage of Sud-Est, we grounded on a coral patch. We tried to get her off, but she would not budge; however, the tide was making, so we had nothing to fear. Whilst in this position, a boat from H.M.S. *Swinger*, containing the chief lieutenant and half-a-dozen Jack tars, boarded us. The lieutenant, who was most courteous, informed us that Sir Wm. Macgregor was very wroth at our behaviour and had a good mind to seize our vessel. We received this news with wonderful calmness and fortitude,

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as for the life of us we could see no reason for seizure. By the kind help of the lieutenant and his men, we were enabled to get clear of the reef, and proceeded to our anchorage, which we reached just before dark. At the request of the Administrator, on the following morning Captain S——g went on board the *Hygeia*. The governor, who was in anything but a good humour, asked him why his vessel should not be seized? Captain S——g explained all the circumstances of the case, not forgetting to dwell on the stupidity of the Government Agent at Samarai.

The governor then said:

"Well, you will have to pay duty on all your goods before landing a package," to which my friend answered:

"I have no intention of doing anything of the kind, nor have I the necessary funds for the purpose. I am quite prepared to pay duty on such goods as I may require for immediate sale, and the balance of them you can put in the Government Bond until such time as I may require to clear them."

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The governor had evidently imagined that he had an ignorant fool to deal with, and was consequently disagreeably surprised. He foolishly lost his temper, telling S——g "that he ought to know perfectly well that the Government had not any bonded stores on Sud-Est yet." But, in the name of common-sense, how does that give the Government a right to exact from people the duty on the whole of their goods? However, the result was, the governor had to give in. My friend only paid about £8 in duties, the balance of the bonded goods having to be sealed down under hatches. *So* we won the day.

The next morning I went ashore. The landing, which is at Griffin Point, is very bad. You have to wade through mangrove mud, the stench of which is enough to breed fever, and then climb a very steep ascent to the first camp.

Here there are numbers of canvas tents pitched on a grassy flat, and it is no easy task carrying heavy packages and tools up to it. About 400 men were on the ground. Some were doing well, others making good wages,

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whilst many were not making "tucker." Others again were lying in the tents sick with fever.

The field only lasted twelve months, during which time dozens of diggers died from malaria, and, although several thousands of ounces of gold were obtained from the islands, it cost a lot of money to get them. It was all alluvial digging from six inches to two feet wash, no reef carrying gold having been found.

Sud-Est is a large island 40 miles in length and eight miles broad. The coast runs east and west, and is surrounded by a fringe of mangroves, with a coral reef extending some distance from its shores. It has high land, the principal mountain, Mount Rattlesnake, which is on the south-east coast, having an altitude of over 3,000 feet. There are hundreds of deep gullies running north and south, with bold hills, covered with good grass, separating them. These hills would make excellent pasturage for cattle, and after a time for sheep also, the grass at present being a little too rank. The deep gullies on all sides would act as natural fences. There is also an inexhaustible supply of good water. There

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are hundreds of native foot-paths leading along these hills and across the gullies throughout the length and breadth of the island. The gullies are very steep and densely wooded. The rivers and creeks, whose name is legion, run north and south, with gullies, for the most part dry, meeting them at right angles.

The greater part of the gold was found on the western side of the island. Strange to say, there was no indication of any leaders or reefs bearing gold, although, occasionally, nuggets weighing four ounces were obtained. At the same time there are many barren quartz reefs here and there. In my opinion, Sud-Est is one of the healthiest spots in New Guinea. The great sickness amongst the diggers was caused by turning up the virgin soil in the workings and so releasing the malarial germs. When the unwholesome food and change in the climate is further considered, one cannot wonder at the result. Such is nearly always the case in new gold-fields.

All the native houses on Sud-Est are built on the summit of the highest hills or mountains. I

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should estimate the total population to be from 3,000 to 4,000.

The natives I saw are smaller than those living on the mainland, in fact, as far as I could judge, they seemed to be half-starved. The coco-nut trees are very few and far between, and yams anything but plentiful. I believe the real reason for this barrenness is to be traced to the fear of their enemies. This is undoubtedly the reason why they build their houses in such inaccessible places, invisible until you are close to them. The natives of Brooker Island constantly make expeditions to Sud-Est in their large war canoes for the express purpose of obtaining heads, and as they are more powerful than their opponents, seldom leave without a number of these ghastly trophies. No wonder the natives of Sud-Est live in mortal dread of them.

Whilst I was on the island, a deputation of miners waited on the warden (Mr. Cameron), requesting him to interview the governor with respect to taking a party of diggers in the *Hygeia* for prospecting Rossel and other large

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islands, as the number of men on Sud-Est was too great for the amount of gold procurable.

Mr. Cameron spoke to the governor, who consented to act on the suggestion on the understanding that the number must not exceed 15, and that those brought their own "tucker." A committee was formed of seven, of which I was one, and the ballot for the 15 took place in one of the tents. The names of those elected were posted up outside.

The party left the next morning, arriving at Rossel Island the following day. Rossel is the last and easternmost island in the Louisiades. It is not so large as Sud-Est, being only about 25 miles long. The eastern end is thickly inhabited. The natives here have a very bad character, and up to the present time white men have been unable to trade with them. It is said that many years ago a large vessel,* with 350 Chinamen on board, got driven out of her course through stress of weather and ran ashore on the island. The natives, who were very numerous,

* 1858. The *St. Paul*, bound from Hongkong to Sydney with 327 Chinamen on board, of whom only *one* escaped.

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surrounded her, and succeeded in capturing all the Chinamen. They made prisoners of them, fattened them up, and killed and ate them whenever their stocks ran short.

It is a curious and also a fortunate fact that the natives much prefer a Chinaman, or one of their own race, to a European. The reason they give is, that a European is not a good-feeding animal; he eats too much meat and not enough vegetables.

The above facts may be of some use to the advocates of vegetarianism.

Cannibalism is still rampant in some districts, but in others has died out. A man who has died a natural death is never eaten. Human flesh is deemed far superior to pig, of which animal they have plenty, and, strange to say, cannibalism is just as rife in districts where other food is abundant as in those where it is scarce. The natives have no European prejudices regarding the human body, and eat it with as good a conscience and as much gusto as we do butcher's meat. To a civilized person, this is of course repugnant, but we must

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remember "different countries have different customs."

The *Hygeia* party spent three days on Rossel, but did not succeed in finding paying gold, only bare "colours" of the precious metal. What else could they expect for a three days' prospect? They then went to Messima (St. Aignan), a large island 40 miles to the north, spent a couple of days on shore finding nothing but "colours," never attempting to follow them up. They afterwards visited Normanby, Ferguson, and Goodenough, all large islands lying to the north of East Cape, and on to China Straits, where they disembarked, having failed in their search.

A few weeks later, a number of "diggers" left Sud-Est on their own behalf, journeying to St. Aignan. They spent several weeks in prospecting, at the end of which they had the satisfaction of discovering two large gullies bearing paying gold. The news of the "find" soon reached Sud-Est, and in a short time 100 men found their way to the new "rush."

The country of St. Aignan is much more

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broken than Sud-Est, and, owing to the denseness of the scrub, is more difficult to travel in. In spite of these disadvantages, a large quantity of gold was obtained, and had it not been for the great amount of sickness amongst the diggers, this quantity would have been considerably increased. Three friends of mine left St. Aignan and went in a small cutter to Normanby Island. They stayed there for four weeks, and not meeting with success proceeded to the adjoining island, viz., Fergusson. The latter is larger than Sud-Est, is only 15 miles from the mainland, and is thickly populated. In a few days they discovered good traces of gold. Unfortunately they were unable to continue the search, as their "tucker" had run short, and also their number (three) was too small to cope with the savages. They liked the look of the country and were strongly of the opinion that it contained paying gold, and much regretted their inability to remain. There are numerous boiling springs on this island, which is evidently of volcanic origin.

The discovery of this "Field" has neverthe-

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less proved conclusively that gold in paying quantities exists in British New Guinea. It certainly was found 100 to 150 miles away from the mainland, but from the formation of the islands, which extend from within a few miles of it in one unbroken line as far as Sud-Est, there being only very narrow straits separating them, it is not too much to say that at one time they formed part of that mainland; therefore it is a fair hypothesis that gold exists there in payable quantities and merely requires tracing.

There have been one or two prospecting parties for that purpose, principally in the neighbourhood of the San Joseph River, on the south coast. They were badly equipped, and as might be expected, were unsuccessful.

Notwithstanding this discouragement, I see no reason to doubt that, within the coming two years, gold will be found in New Guinea proper and in large quantities, but the search, to be successful, must be undertaken by a party fully equipped and with plenty of carriers, South Sea Islanders being the best and most reliable.

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CHAPTER VI.

VOYAGE TO BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO.

HAVING been some weeks on Sud-Est, I left in the cutter *S——l*, and after a smart passage of four days, arrived in China Straits.

The first news that greeted us was that Captain Ancell, of the ketch *Star of Peace*, had been cruelly murdered by the natives of Chad's Bay, only 30 miles distant from our anchorage. His vessel had then been burnt, after the whole of the "Trade" had been taken out of her and divided amongst them. Captain Ancell was an old man, and one who had always treated the natives with kindness.

I have often had a yarn with him on board his craft, and heard the lamentable news of his death with much sorrow. The natives, generally speaking, are most treacherous, but there are exceptions. The Bush tribes are infinitely more savage than those living on the coast, and the latter have a wholesome dread of them,

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as they periodically make raids, at which times a terrible panic ensues. The Bushmen are much dirtier and more unkempt, evidently being totally ignorant of the benefits of a bath.

In navigating the waters of New Guinea and touching at the various islands and mainland, if you be on a trading expedition, great care must be exercised, as the sight of a large quantity of "Trade," such as tobacco, hatchets, etc., immediately kindles a desire in the natives to acquire it, and unless you keep a careful watch and are well armed, they will kill you for the sake of the booty, and then set fire to the vessel. Many a vessel and many a white man have met that untimely fate during the last three years, and among them several of my friends. Looking at it from a philosophical point of view, this desire on the part of the natives is but natural. How many of us, notwithstanding our boasted centuries of civilization, envy a man his wealth and riches, and, but for the strong arm of the law, might even go to the extremity of killing him for the sake of plunder.

At times they seem to kill for the sake of

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killing. It is a savage instinct (acquired perhaps for defence) belonging to primitive or early man. Doubtless, some of my readers have heard the story of the aboriginal boy of Queensland who was walking behind his master and begged of him permission to go in front, as "he had such an intense desire to kill him." In the English schoolboy, who delights in torturing animals, in tieing tin cans to dogs' tails, and in playing practical jokes upon his friends, a relic of savage nature inherited by him from ancestors of a remote age may be recognised.

It is only by dint of centuries of civilization and refinement, that we have been enabled to control and dominate our savage instincts, whereas those of primitive man are free and unrestrained, so we must make some allowances for these wild children of Nature. Maybe, centuries hence, given the same opportunities for advancement that we have had, they, too, will eventually become "even as we are," and their present savage instincts be toned down into mere sport and playfulness. At any rate,

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we may hope that these, our dreams of the future, are prophetic.

The Government schooner *Hygèia* had just arrived in port, and upon hearing the sad news of the murder, the Administrator (Sir Wm. Macgregor) determined to go to the scene of the tragedy, taking with him the diggers on board, with whose assistance he purposed giving the perpetrators of the outrage a lesson they would not soon forget. At this time I had made arrangements to go in the cutter *S——l* on a trading expedition to some of the wildest districts of British New Guinea, where the natives speak a different language, and where a white man is a *rara avis*. The party comprised three all told, not a very large number considering the dangerous parts we intended to visit.

There was the captain, S——g, K——h, chief officer and I, second mate and crew.

Not having any cargo on board, unless a few cases of "Trade" may be counted as such, we had to fill up with ballast, consisting of stones or rocks obtained on the beach. It is preferable to bags of sand, as the latter are liable to

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impede the working of the pump, and, as our little craft had a small leak, we were all the more anxious to keep the pump in good working order and free from all obstruction, as upon it much might depend.

We made an early start, taking full advantage of the ebb tide, which is very strong in these waters, running at the rate of six miles an hour. We had not long left the anchorage when day began to break.

> "A wind came up out of the sea,
> And said, 'O, mists, make room for me,'
> It hailed the ships and cried, 'Sail on
> Ye mariners, the night is gone.'
> And hurried landwards far away,
> Crying, 'Awake! it is the day.'
> It said unto the forest, 'Shout!
> Hang all your leafy banners out!'
> It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
> And said, 'O, bird, awake and sing.'"

We soon swept past the South Foreland and across Milne Bay, anchoring in a small bight on its northern shores, a few miles to the westward of East Cape. Not far from here, viz. at Bentley Bay, which lies to the north-west, there are some strange-looking natives. All the men have the fully-developed breasts of a woman.

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This is all the more remarkable, as such a peculiarity, as far as my knowledge goes, is unknown in any other part of New Guinea.

The distance across Milne Bay, from the South Foreland to East Cape, is about ten miles, and from the mouth to the head of the bay somewhat over twenty. Its shores are lined by numbers of villages, all of them densely inhabited and in a prosperous condition. The villages are a mile or so apart, and the natives dwelling in them are of a light brown colour, some approaching in fairness to Europeans.

I was spending the night at a place called "Killerton," and after kai-kai (supper) joined a circle of young men and maidens who were seated on the ground, passing the tranquil hours of night in singing and general conversation. The conversation was hardly suited to a fashionable drawing-room reception, but from a native's point of view was modesty itself.

Among the faces grouped around me I was much struck by that of a young girl of about 16 years of age. Her complexion was very fair, her figure full of grace. Her face, of which the

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features were decidedly of a Caucasian type, was full of animation, her eyes sparkling with fun and humour, a "toga" or scarf was loosely thrown over her left shoulder, serving to heighten the effect of her charms, as she coquettishly tossed her head aside, her eyes at one time pensively looking downwards, at another filled with the fire of impetuous youth. At first I mistook her for a half-caste, but I reflected that such a breed is unknown in New Guinea; and afterwards, from my enquiries, learnt that both her parents were natives, pure and simple.

There are splendid plantations of yams, taro, bananas, plantains, sweet potatoes, and groves of sago, coco-nut, and the betel palm, extending from the beach for several miles inland. Behind is a vast amphitheatre of mountains, with numerous rivers and creeks.

The soil on the flats is most fertile, and capable of growing anything. Near the village "Maivara" there is some very good undulating land, which I have not the slightest doubt would fatten cattle. There is but one drawback to this district, viz., the heavy moisture

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caused by the frequent rains. This excess of moisture makes a prolonged residence in the bay unhealthy. The natives are better off here than in most parts. They have good houses, fine plantations, and a superabundance of food. They are very fond of feasting and dancing, and hold several great feasts during the year.

I must not omit to mention the millions of coco-nut palms that thrive here. They are to be found in all stages of growth, and close to the water's edge.

On the one tree you can see a whole family of nuts, from the baby, the size of a walnut, to the fully-matured, the size of a human head.

It is from Milne Bay that the greater part of the copra is obtained. I should estimate the total population of the bay to be not far short of 8,000. From this number a very fair idea of the quantities of yams, taro, etc., necessary for home consumption, may be formed.

We remained at anchor one night and at 7 a.m. the next day decided to weigh anchor, and continue our journey. Easier said than

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done. Two of us worked at the winch, heaved the chain short, when, to our discomfiture, the anchor obstinately refused to leave its watery bed. We tugged and swore, then swore and tugged, but all to no purpose. The anchor, which was a heavy one, had evidently got foul of a lump of coral, and do what we could we were unable to influence it. We were in about seven fathoms of water, and in dangerous proximity to a coral reef, just on our lee. To add to the mortification of our enforced imprisonment, the breeze was every moment increasing in strength. Of course we might have slipped our cable, but what should we have down with only a light anchor to depend upon? We should have been obliged to relinquish our voyage, and return to China Straits. Seeing some natives on the beach we hailed them, when they at once boarded us. Upon offering them several sticks of tobacco, three of them dived and attempted to free the anchor. The attempt proved futile, as the water was too deep for them. We then got out a kedge anchor, and hoisted the mainsail, but all of no avail.

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We now held a consultation, and one of us suggested we should slip the cable.

We decided, after a few minutes' rest, to have one more trial, and if unsuccessful to leave our anchor at the bottom of the ocean, and return to port. After numerous efforts, we felt a sudden jerk, when up came the anchor with a large lump of coral attached to it. We were soon under weigh, and after beating for several hours under a strong breeze, came to an anchorage close to a native village on Lydia Island.

This island is immediately abreast of Normanby Island or Du-au. There are numerous villages here, and all the hills are covered with plantations. The natives, too, are superior, and, in my opinion, thoroughly to be trusted. A native chief, named Paulo, owns considerable property on the island, and therefore has great influence. I have often met him, and have invariably found him to be trustworthy.

He is not particularly handsome, having a mouth of enormous dimensions, as large as an ordinary letter-box. His headquarters are at

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"Quato," but he often spends a couple of weeks at his country residence on Lydia Island.

As we had a long journey before us we obtained from the natives a large quantity of firewood, and filled up our water tank and cask, as, on a voyage of any extent, those are the two most important items. We invited one of the natives to accompany us on the trip. He signified his willingness, and came on board. We made a start early the next morning, and after accompanying us for a mile, he jumped into his canoe and returned home. As we purposed going such a great distance, he considered the chances of coming back very remote and uncertain. He would have come in very handy for cutting up firewood and boiling yams, otherwise we were just as well without him.

The harbour we had just left is an excellent one, with good holding ground and perfectly sheltered from all winds.

We had to navigate between several dangerous-looking coral reefs, and in a few hours rounded Cape Ventenat, the south end of Normanby Island.

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Canoes came from the shore loaded with yams, etc., which we purchased from the natives, keeping our vessel close-hauled, in order to permit of their approach.

We soon left them far behind, and passed close to the small island "Digaragara." This last is memorable on account of the terrible tragedy that took place there a few years previously.

A young man, Fred Miller, who was engaged in the Bêche-de-mer fishery, had a smoke house on this island, and employed several of the savages. His boat was on the beach, and he was superintending the curing of the fish, when the natives, without any warning, suddenly made a dash at him. Some held him while the others put an end to him with their "tomahawks." Miller had always treated the natives well, and had never interfered with or molested them in any way. It was simply their lust of plunder, added to the distinction gained by obtaining a human head.

Were these diabolical savages punished for this outrage?

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I regret to say no. Nothing was done to them. It was only another white man added to their list of victims. His murderers are to this day enjoying their full liberty, and doubtless, when seated around the camp fires, recount to their friends, with careless glee, the history of their terrible deeds.

Everyone who had known Miller, and he had many friends, was furious when he heard the details of the massacre.

The natives of Normanby have always been of a stubborn and hostile disposition, refusing to have anything to do with the white man, or to have any trading relations with him. Maybe this is partly owing to the terrible scenes enacted by those on board the *Hopeful* seven years ago. The *Hopeful* was a schooner engaged in the labour trade.

She was accustomed to make voyages to the South Seas for the purpose of obtaining Kanaka labourers for the sugar plantations in Queensland. The term of their indentures was three years, when they had to be restored to their homes.

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About the year 1883, finding the business in the South Seas rather overdone, she turned her attention to New Guinea.

A man of the name of Williams was the captain in command of her, and McNeil acted as Government agent. They proceeded to Normanby Island for recruiting purposes.

Instead of obtaining recruits in a legitimate way, they behaved in the most brutal manner. Armed to the teeth, they landed in one of their boats and kidnapped the natives against their will. If any struggled they shot them down without mercy, and even shot them in the water as they were swimming from their canoes to the shore.

After killing many, and imprisoning as many as they could on board, they sailed to Queensland, where they landed their living freight.

They say "murder will out," and so it did in this instance. The Government, immediately upon hearing of their outrageous conduct, arrested McNeil and Williams, and at the same time caused the unwilling immigrants to be returned to their island homes. In due course

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the two culprits were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged. As is fashionable in such cases, a monster petition was got up by the people of Queensland to reprieve these murderers, and laid before the Executive Council. After long deliberation the Council commuted the sentence to penal servitude for life, the *first five years in irons*. One of the prisoners (McNeil) died in his irons. The Queensland Government also strictly forbade any more recruiting in New Guinea, so *that* was the last time natives in New Guinea were torn from their homes. Recruiting is still permitted in the South Seas, but the regulations in force are most strict.

At the time of my leaving Queensland for this country, namely, November, 1889, the Government were seriously considering the advisability of prohibiting further importation of Kanaka labour.

To this, of course, the planters seriously objected, as they maintain they cannot afford to work their plantations with white labour.

The *Hopeful* massacres have undoubtedly

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caused reprisals on the part of the Normanby Islanders, and not without excuse.

Unfortunately the innocent have to suffer for the sins of the guilty.

We now laid our course for the "Woodlark Islands," 70 miles to the north-east. We hugged the coast of Normanby as far as Cape Pearson, when we stood out to sea. The coast up to this point is very bold and rugged.

A square block of frowning mountains runs from Cape Ventenat to Cape Pearson.

Loud claps of thunder reverberated through the hills; black clouds were sailing along with threatening aspect. Strong gusts of wind burst with fury against our little craft as she tore through the seething foam.

We were travelling eight knots an hour—a great speed for a boat of 12 tons. Luckily, the wind was pretty favourable, otherwise we should have had a bad time of it. As it was, we deemed it prudent to close reef the mainsail and jib. Evidently we were in for a dirty night, as the wind hourly increased in strength. Our

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boat, however, was staunch and true, and laughed at wind and storm.

Darkness suddenly fell on us, as, in tropical countries, no sooner has the sun set than night spreads her black mantle over land and sea.

After careering for some hours at a breakneck speed, we began to think it was high time to "heave to." We roughly estimated the distance we had travelled and our proximity to a large island. Knowing that a reef extended from this island, we were most anxious to keep it at a respectful distance, as to run on to it at the rate of eight knots an hour meant certain destruction, as a heavy sea was breaking on it.

I suggested "heaving to," at 10.0 p.m., but my two comrades considered 9.30 to be safer, so, being in the minority, I gave in. Fortunate for us that we did so.

"Heaving to" with half a gale blowing, and a heavy sea running is rather a delicate matter. We took up our respective stations, and watching a good opportunity, sung out "ready" when, with the exception of shipping half-a-dozen

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buckets of water, the manœuvre was successfully carried out.

Everything was made as snug as possible, but we prepared ourselves to spend an anxious and restless night.

The wind still held sway. How our little craft did "job" about! There was no sleep for any of us that night. The whole of our attention was concentrated on the boat, as the slightest carelessness or neglect, in such a sea, on our part, would almost certainly have fatal consequences.

As the first streaks of dawn lined the horizon our position was made known to us.

To our great surprise, there, right in front of us, not 200 yards away, stood the island, with the coral reef merely a few boats' lengths ahead. We realized that we had had a narrow escape. Where should we have been had we "stood on" for a few seconds longer the previous night? Dashed to pieces amongst the coral rocks, and food for the sharks. In less than two minutes we had slackened the sheets and away we tore, our lee gunwale under water

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most of the time, beating our way to "Egum" (Little Woodlarks), 10 miles to the eastward, which we were glad to reach at 5 o'clock that evening.

Directly the sails were furled and everything made fast, we were honoured by a succession of visitors, both men and women. It is very unusual for the latter to come spontaneously on board. The chief's wife welcomed us to the island, and stated that a dish of yams was being prepared for our delectation. We sent on shore a billy-can and some tea, thus saving us the trouble of boiling it on board. We felt rather tired with our tempestuous voyage, and were glad of a rest.

Our most distinguished visitor was "Tokai-akus," the Dwarf.

Not having met him before, I was introduced with due ceremony. In all my travels I had never beheld such a curiosity. Let me endeavour to describe him. Imagine a man 3 feet 6 inches in height, of a chocolate colour, 35 years of age, having a Herculean chest, with arms the length of a child's. An immense head

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covered with a shock of hair falling on his neck in ringlets, a flat nose, and a mouth stretching from ear to ear. Add to all a light summer suit consisting of a palm leaf round his loins, and the picture is complete. He was, without exception, the most monstrous specimen of Papuan humanity in the whole of New Guinea. As both he and I understood the language spoken on the south-east coast, we soon became on friendly terms.

The chief of "Egum" was absent, having gone on a cruise to the "Trobriand Islands," and was not expected back for a month. The houses on "Egum" were different from those we had been accustomed to. Instead of being built on blocks they were level with the ground. The anchorage here is quite sheltered, being close in to a small reef.

The difficulty is in reaching it; once there you are in still water and can remain at anchor without fear of dragging. In navigating these parts you have to trust mainly to your eyesight as it is practically unsurveyed. A chart would only lead to confusion and maybe into peril.

"Egum" is connected with another small

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island by a coral reef on which the surf breaks with some violence. This reef lies to the E.N.E.

About sundown the natives came off with the yams and tea prepared for us.

They had boiled the yams in coco-nut milk, which is far preferable to water. We fell to with a will, the sea air having given us a good appetite. We showed our visitors over the vessel, when they expressed their admiration at everything they saw. They had never seen a vessel of such large dimensions, viz. 12 tons.

They were particularly interested in a cabinet photograph of a young lady, which adorned our cabin. We explained to them that it was a "Sina Dim-dim," *i.e.* a White Lady, in fact was the wife of one of us. In answer to our queries they considered her "*very good.*"

After supper two of us took the dinghy and rowed on shore, leaving our mate in charge of the cutter.

The island contains about 30 inhabitants. We were quickly surrounded by the entire population. They were very anxious to know how long we intended to stay and whither we

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were bound? We informed them we were going a long way over the sea to a strange land, and could not possibly return for at least a month, but that we would not fail to give them a call on our way back.

The next morning we went to the adjoining island, where we bagged three or four pigeons. We also obtained some Bêche-de-mer from the natives, for which we paid them in tobacco.

I had hoped to meet a native princess, the daughter of the chief of the Woodlarks, but was doomed to disappointment. I had received a glowing description of her beauty, and my curiosity was excited. However, I had the pleasure of seeing her on my return visit.

A small cutter belonging to us, named the "*A——s*" had left "Egum" for the Trobriand Group a few days previous, so, as we wished to fall in with her, we decided to sail on the following day. We invited the dwarf and a boy of the name of Sindiwaia to accompany us, promising to bring them safely home in one "moon."

To our astonishment they both accepted our

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kind offer, notwithstanding we were bound for New Britain, a country they had never heard of. After taking an affectionate farewell of their friends they came on board with their luggage. Their luggage consisted of two bau-bau pipes, a few betel nuts and two or three native mats. Whatever wardrobe they possessed was left on shore. We conducted them to the "hold," which was to be their sleeping quarters during the trip. They stowed their worldly possessions down below and prepared to enjoy themselves. It showed great pluck in them, trusting themselves so far away from home and for so long a period.

Our number was now increased to five, quite enough for so small a craft. Having finished our business, we left for the Trobriands, hoping to overtake the cutter "*A*——*s*," although we were ignorant of where we should meet her.

When leaving "Egum" you have to go through a barrier reef. The openings are very narrow, therefore it behoves you to be well on the alert. Also in this district it always appears to be blowing half a gale. It is absolutely

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necessary for one man to stand in the bows and give warning to the helmsman of any reefs or shoals. You can always recognise them by the discoloured water. We often had to sail a distance of five miles with but a couple of feet of water under our keel and on the constant look out for "gibbers" or rocks. It is said "Without danger or chance of mishap, travel is never worth a rap."

Nevertheless we should have been quite satisfied to dispense with coral reefs and sunken rocks. It will be years before these parts of New Guinea are surveyed. With one or two narrow escapes we managed to keep clear of the hidden dangers and at about four o'clock in the afternoon were in sight of the Trobriands. Knowing that our cutter "*A——s*" was sure to have called at Lagrandiere, one of the islands of the group, we determined to visit it, hoping by good luck either to meet her there or learn her whereabouts.

The evening was a beautiful one. A steady breeze was blowing from the south-east and a few miles to the north-east lay the island to

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which we bound. The lurid sun was just about to set, and the sea was calm save a gentle ripple. All nature smiled, as if conscious of her beauty. It was the most enchanting hour of day — Sunset—whose delights are made more precious by their brevity. Alas, the varied colours are soon blotted out and transmuted into a sombre black, but as we gazed on that scene of sea and sky, the sin and sorrow of the world seemed to fade from our memory.

Half-an-hour later we dropped anchor within 20 yards of the shore, and to our delight found the cutter "*A*——*s*" already there, completely surrounded by canoes full of wild and dusky savages. To tell the truth, they were more glad to see us than we to see them, as there being but two of them, and their boat a small one, it was as much as they could manage to keep the savages in check. They had been obliged to draw their revolvers and for some time had been in considerable danger of their lives. We anchored close alongside of them, when there was much rejoicing and shaking of hands.

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We now mustered altogether five white men and four blacks, so that we could have offered a strong resistance. As our boat was the larger of the two, our friends came on board of her, where we all dined together.

What a pleasure it is to meet friends unexpectedly, especially in a lonely spot unfrequented by white men and surrounded by hordes of shrieking demons, armed with clubs and spears, who might at any time use them. Dozens of magnificent canoes, with from 20 to 30 warriors in each, encircled us, and beyond, a perfect "flotilla" of them. All their occupants stood up, craning their necks forward, striving to get a glimpse of the mysterious white men.

What was there to prevent them from killing us and capturing our vessels? It certainly was not the fear of our fire-arms, for the natives of this district are perfectly ignorant of the destructive powers of a rifle or a revolver. It was their gross superstition. They believe the white man to be a species of "Devil," and possessed of supernatural powers. How fortunate is such a belief for us; were it

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otherwise, if they only knew we were ordinary mortals like themselves, it would be necessary to educate their respect for us by a course of instruction in musketry.

We had a right merry evening. Our skipper played on the violin, toasts were given and taken, and our several experiences recounted since last we had met, seven weeks since. Although nature has not gifted me with a fine voice, I treated the company to a song, my friend accompanying me on the violin. The hours flew by until one of our number fell fast asleep, tired out with the evening's dissipation. We put him to bed on the hatches, with a sail and some rugs for a covering, and soon after turned in ourselves, to woo, with more deliberation, the goddess of slumber.

In the morning, we informed our two friends of our intention of proceeding to New Britain, and that we hoped to meet them again in about a month. They wished us *bon voyage* and a safe return. They then left us in order to visit several islands for the purpose of trading for Bêche-de-mer. We remained at Lagrandiere

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until the following day, as we wished to buy a quantity of yams, and, if possible, trade with the natives. The native town lay about two miles distant from us. It was the largest town I had ever seen; it must have contained from 300 to 400 houses, and allowing an average of six persons to each house, would have a population of 2,000. At sunrise, dozens of large canoes, in full sail and crowded with natives, arrived upon the scene. Their canoes here are magnificent, all the seams caulked, beautifully carved, and all the sails apparently new; in fact, the canoes themselves appeared quite new. They were infinitely superior and better finished than any I had yet seen. Our little craft was so completely surrounded by them that it was impossible to drop a potato overboard without the risk of its falling into one of them. What a chatter they kept up! Imagine several hundred native throats shouting at the same time. Several of them had harsh, discordant voices, and they were the ones who talked the loudest and longest. If anything out of the common attracted their attention they would

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one and all send up a piercing shriek, which, unless you were accustomed to their peculiar ways, would terrify you.

We allowed a few to come on board, but the difficulty was to prevent all of them doing so. I had to keep constantly rushing to the sides of the vessel with a naked sword, slashing at them in order to keep them in their canoes. Once let a number obtain a foothold on board, and you put yourself in their power. At any moment they may obtain possession of the vessel, and then good-bye to dear life. So long as savages believe that you have power over them, you have nothing to fear. Immediately you allow them to consider you in danger or anxious, look out for squalls. Take a man who enters a den of wild beasts, what is it that prevents him being torn to pieces? Is it that he is stronger than those wild beasts? Nothing of the kind. If only those beasts had the knowledge of their power, they would not think twice before springing upon and devouring him. The true reason is that the man shows no fear. From his manner and his behaviour, these wild

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animals infer that he is not afraid of them, and consequently believe that he possesses some hidden power greater than theirs.

It is this and this alone that keeps them in check and closes their mouths. It is just the same with the civilized white man and the true wild savage. Once show the white feather and all is up. Keep your head cool, show a bold front, and keep your eyes about you, and the command you will have over them is astonishing. The whole livelong day, one of us had to sit on the scuttle, keeping a sharp look-out all round the vessel, a naked sword in hand, a loaded revolver in his belt and a couple of Winchester rifles fully primed in the cabin, all ready for use. The remaining two of us were engaged in bartering with the natives for spears, clubs, shields, "chunam" knives, wooden fish-hooks, ebony paper-cutters, and even "gods." We also purchased about a ton of yams, which we could easily dispose of at a good profit, in New Britain. Our two native companions, Tokaiakus and Sindiwaia, were unable to speak the language of this part, so we had to

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do all our business by signs. Tobacco is unknown here, and they would not accept any. Hoop-iron was their great desideratum. Luckily we had some on board. We also did some trading in empty beer-bottles. We first drank the beer, and then exchanged the bottles for Bêche-de-mer. If this method of exchange would only last, the profits of Bêche-de-mering would be enormous. But after a time they got tired of glass bottles. To hoop-iron they were constant. In time, of course, tobacco will become the chief article of trade, but then, tobacco is expensive. Trade tobacco costs in Queensland, 1s. 3d. per lb., then there is the transit, say 1d. per pound, and New Guinea duty of 1s., so it costs you 2s. 4d. per lb. on board. Hoop-iron, on the other hand, is very cheap, and it does not matter how inferior the quality so long as it *is* hoop-iron. With hoop-iron they can improve their tools and weapons, thus saving them much labour.

I determined to go on shore, so having told my comrades that, in event of any danger, I would fire one shot, I strapped on my revolver,

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exposing it free from its pouch and jumped into one of the canoes alongside. By signs I intimated to them my desire, but before trusting myself to the tender mercies of such nice-looking gentlemen, I caused the leading man of the canoe to step on board our vessel, where he would be held as a hostage for my personal safety. He evidently thoroughly grasped the idea, and acquiesced in it. I was soon landed on the beach. I had brought a towel with me, intending to have a bathe, but considering I should have to leave my revolver on the beach, I postponed that luxury to some future occasion.

No sooner had I landed than they all commenced jabbering to me at the same time. I did not understand a solitary word they said, but had an idea they wished me to accompany them to the town, which was visible in the distance.

Being alone and unable to converse with them, I did not care to trust myself among a couple of thousand wild animals so far away from the cutter and with no arms but a revolver.

I shook my head as a sign that I regretted I

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was unable to avail myself of their polite invitation, but whether they understood my meaning or not I cannot say.

The island I found to be very low land, not a solitary hill on it, covered with light small bushes or trees, with a sandy, dry soil. Notwithstanding this, there is a plentiful supply of yams; in fact, they have plenty to spare. There would be no difficulty in obtaining a cargo of 10 to 20 tons.

All the islands of the Trobriand Group are low-lying, thickly populated, and well supplied with food. The natives of Lagrandiere are well-built, fine-looking men, dark-skinned, and are constantly on the war-path. At the time of our visit, they had just returned from one of their predatory expeditions, covered with glory, and laden with the spoils of war. They had completely routed the enemy, and had burnt their villages. We may deplore the brutality of these intertribal fights, but it is the sefights or wars that perpetuate the race by saving its members from the fatal effects of sloth, and a lack of interest in life. If in Europe even, all war or

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chance of war, were at an end, the spirit of true manliness might in time languish, despite the duties, occupations, and generous ambitions of civilization.

A great chief, if not the greatest in New Guinea, resides in the Trobriands, and holds dominion over them.

He has a splendid house to live in, and a large retinue of slaves. He never walks a yard, but is always carried on a kind of sedan-chair or stretcher. His word is law, and his influence over the natives of his kingdom very great.

This is no romance.

He is verily a king. In most districts of New Guinea the chiefs are generally the leading men of the village, with a certain amount of influence, but not to any great extent.

In this case it is quite different. The king of the Trobriands is as much a king to his subjects as the autocratic Czar is to the serfs of Russia. I was extremely disappointed at not seeing him. Unfortunately he was absent from home, and would not be back for a week or so.

The natives took the most absorbing interest

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in our cutter. They gazed at it in wonder and astonishment. They felt it in their hands to make sure it was a reality and not an empty delusion. We steered by a wheel. The wheel seemed to take their fancy immensely. Every now and then, when something fresh attracted their notice, they would rend the skies with their shouts, their mouths wide open with astonishment and admiration. We were no less surprised at the beautiful construction of their canoes, but did not exhibit our feelings in so marked a manner. They stayed by us from sunrise to sunset. They ought to have felt tired, as they never stopped talking, and stood up most of the time.

At sundown they left us in peace, and sailed back to their town, which was glistening in the distance. It was a moving sight. Here were we three, over a hundred miles from the nearest white man, calmly sitting on deck, watching a large fleet of canoes full of wild and treacherous savages wending their way homewards. What a relief to be rid of them. There is nothing so tiring and trying to the system as being con-

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tinuously, for hours together, on the watch lest you be taken suddenly by surprise and cruelly murdered. We felt thoroughly wearied out, and longed to get away from their unceasing attentions. We knew they would not visit us again until the first thing in the morning, so we took the opportunity to discuss our future plans.

We decided to leave for the Duke of York Islands at break of day.

Not having been there before, we got out a general chart, which we studied with great interest. We carried a sextant and compass, so we entertained no difficulty in reaching our destination. We had no "sheet charts," but that was of no great moment. The south-east "trades" were still blowing, and we hoped they would hold with us until we commenced our return voyage, when we trusted to be favoured with the north-west monsoon, as the winds generally veer to that quarter towards the end of December.

Having obtained a plentiful supply of yams, and a couple of bags of Bêche-de-mer, we took

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farewell of "Lagrandiere," steering our course due north.

We passed through a perfect archipelago of islands, and on the second day rounded Jurien. Although we did not land, I took a great interest in this island. Several years ago the schooner *Kate Kearney* left Queensland for New Guinea, for the purpose of engaging in the Bêche-de-mer fishery. On board of her was a great friend of mine, named McDonnell. She was successful in obtaining a large quantity of fish, but through a series of gales she found herself at Jurien Island almost dismasted, and minus sails, etc. Here she had perforce to remain at anchor for six months. The anchorage is in a narrow passage between Jurien and a smaller island, and completely hidden from passing vessels. They were obliged to remain prisoners here until the change of the monsoon to the north-west, as without a favourable wind in their then disabled state, it would have been impossible for them to have reached a port. From their isolated position, and the fact of being right out of the track of any vessels, not a word of their fate reached

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Queensland. They were six months overdue, during which time nothing had been seen or heard of them. The vessel and her crew had long been given up as lost.

McDonnell's family, who lived in Brisbane, having hoped against hope, reluctantly numbered their son with the dead. They went into mourning, stricken with grief at the untimely fate of their cherished offspring. Imagine their intense joy and surprise upon receiving a telegram from their long-lost son, who had arrived safely in the *Kate Kearney* at Cooktown, safe and sound. The meeting that took place, when so many emotions must have contended for the mastery, is not mine to describe.

It may be of interest to relate that about a year afterwards the *Kate Kearney* was wrecked during a flood off the mouth of the Endeavour River.

After leaving North Island, which is the outermost one of the Trobriand group, we were soon in mid-ocean, steering a direct course for the Duke of York Islands. The wind holding good, we presently made St. George's Channel

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the coast of New Ireland close on our starboard, and the island of New Britain on our port.

We were now within 70 miles of our destination, "Mioko." The channel is about 15 miles broad, the soundings deep, and the coast "steep to."

No sooner had we got into mid-channel than we were treated to a succession of thunderstorms, with the rain pouring down in torrents, accompanied by violent gusts of wind. It is only in the tropics that such rain can be seen. Although well provided with oilskins, we were literally drenched to the skin. There was evidently a terrible leak in the heavens above.

A few hours later a grand sight enthralled us. A magnificent waterspout appeared not a mile to windward of us, doubtless evolved by the recent heavy rain-pour. The surface of the sea had become an active fountain surmounted by a vast funnel-shaped column reaching to the clouds above. It was travelling in a southerly direction in dangerous proximity to our vessel. We deemed it prudent to "keep her away" a couple of points, when shortly we had the

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satisfaction of seeing it burst and vanish into thin air. Had this waterspout struck our little craft, this narrative would never have been written, for the writer of it would have been quietly resting in the bed of St. George's Channel.

We were hugging the coast of New Ireland when, rather to our surprise, a group of low islands, one of them conspicuous from a solitary ree standing out in bold relief on it, hove in sight Making sure that these must be the Duke of York Islands, we slightly altered our course, and after a smart run of three hours, entered the passage, which is close to the island with the above-mentioned tree, and anchored in the lovely harbour of "Mioko," within a few yards of the shore.

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CHAPTER VII.

BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO.

LEAVING our "Dwarf" in charge of the cutter, we paid a visit to Mr. H——r, the manager of the "Mioko" plantation. "Mioko" is one of the Hamburg Plantation Company's branches.

They have large plantations in "Samoa," and their operations are most extensive. Mr. H——r and his assistant, both of them Germans, were the sole representatives of the white race in the Duke of York group.

The manager's house, which is situated a few yards from the beach, presented a most picturesque appearance. It was built entirely of bamboo, with a roof of shingles; and, being lined with bamboo, was, notwithstanding the tropical heat, always cool inside. They gave us a hearty welcome although we were perfect strangers. To their delight they discovered in one of us a countryman of theirs, whilst S——g was a Norwegian, and I an Englishman.

The Germans had the advantage, being in the

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majority. The different buildings of the plantation gave it the appearance of a township. A substantial wharf extended from the beach, alongside of which a vessel could lie and discharge her cargo. Connecting the wharf with the large copra house were tram lines, over which the produce was conveyed in trucks to the vessel and thence into the hold. Next to the copra house, which was capable of storing 200 tons of copra, was a fine iron building used as a "store," where the different articles of trade were kept and in which were the offices of the manager. There were numerous out-buildings of every description, all of them kept in excellent order. At the time of our visit, the copra house contained over 100 tons of copra awaiting shipment.

Made fast to the wharf was the cutter *Atafu*, which was owned by the plantation and was used principally for obtaining labour recruits from the South Seas, and for visiting the different out-stations of the company in New Ireland, supplying them with "trade" and bringing back to "Mioko" the copra, etc., obtained.

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The manager, whose dwelling was surrounded by a pretty garden kept in scrupulous order, pressed us to be his guests for a couple of days, and we gladly accepted. Accustomed to the wilds of New Guinea, this place seemed to us like an "oasis" in the desert.

He kindly sent on board our craft a couple of natives whom he could trust, telling them to look after her and keep strangers away. The harbour is completely land-locked, being hemmed in by numerous islands, and protected from the south-east winds by the island of "Mioko."

The captain and mate of the *Atafu* were invited to meet us at dinner, thus increasing our number to seven. The captain was a German, and the mate a Yankee, so that the various nationalities were well represented. A smart native youth, specially trained by Mr. H——r, waited at table. He would have put to shame many a waiter at a first-rate London club. The dinner was an excellent one, and our host full of good spirits.

After doing full justice to the good things

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provided, the bottle was passed round, toasts were drunk and jokes cracked. In such a varied assembly the fund of anecdote was inexhaustible. Everyone was enjoying himself to the top of his bent, when unfortunately one of my mates, in pure joke, made some *mal apropos* remark to our host. He very foolishly took it up in the wrong light, considered it an insult, jumped up from his seat and rushed round to my friend, challenging him to fight. It was a most unfortunate *contretemps*.

Had not my friend been a man of equable temperament, and with great power of self-control, the result would have been most disastrous, and in all likelihood Mr. H——r would have been annihilated. He had evidently partaken too freely of the juice of the grape; or was it, being a German, he was unable to understand a jest? However, my friend wisely kept his temper, the storm-cloud passed over, and all was harmony again. We learnt afterwards that our host was naturally of a most excitable nature and was of a pugnacious disposition.

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Fortunately for him, my friend, like the British lion, was not easily roused. Like that noble animal, he was possessed of great strength, and in a combat would have easily vanquished his antagonist. What with singing and playing on the piano and violin, we spent a most enjoyable evening, and did not retire to rest until the small hours.

One of us occupied the only bedroom in the house, another slept on the sofa, whilst I camped in a hammock on the verandah.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour at which we retired to rest, we were all up at six o'clock. Coffee was then served, the most delicious coffee I had tasted for many a month. It was grown on the plantation and was properly made. How different it tasted from the coffee one gets in an hotel!

We had a refreshing swim in the bay, heedless of the sharks, and returned to the house ready to tackle a substantial breakfast. Breakfast over, by desire of Mr. H——r, we hailed our seaman-in-charge, viz., "Tokaiakus" the dwarf, to come on shore. He immediately responded,

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and great was the astonishment on his landing on the beach. Numbers of natives were strolling about, and they soon gathered round, gaping with wonder at our New Guinea representative.

"Tokaiakus" was no less astonished at them, and evidently considered his race far superior to theirs. When asked his opinion of the "Mioko" natives, he replied, "They are no good, they go about naked, New Guinea man he wear clothes." Different people have different opinions.

Although our dwarf was more decently dressed than they, he was not overburdened with garments, being covered by a palm leaf. Nevertheless, clothing has its degrees, and his was a comparative one.

In company with the manager we went over the different buildings and inspected the various improvements. Everything was of a substantial character, and the manager informed us that the profits of the Mioko Branch for the year 1887 were £1,300, which, in our opinion, was very good.

We paid a visit to the cutter, *Atafu*, and were

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invited by her captain to stay to lunch. She is 37 tons register and a very smart-looking craft, indeed we could hardly realise we were on a trading vessel, for she had more the appearance of a gentleman's yacht. The hold was empty, and had just been white-washed, A great bell, which rang at 9 a.m. every day, was a signal for certain natives to proceed on board and wash down decks.

Everything on board was scrupulously clean, and, as on board a man-of-war, in its proper place. The captain received £12 a month and his food, and, with such a vessel under him, I consider his lot a happy one.

In the afternoon we strolled round the plantation. The land here is fertile, and a large area of it is owned by the Hamburg Company. Mr. H——r purposed going to the "Fatherland" shortly, when the managership would fall to his assistant, and, if I may venture the remark, the change would be a beneficial one.

Copra is the principal industry carried on, though coffee is grown to some extent. The latter product pays well, therefore I wonder

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there is not more attention paid to its cultivation.

The natives' canoes are much lighter built than those of New Guinea, and do not carry a sail. They are used for paddling only, and never venture out of sight of land. The natives themselves are quite distinct from the Papuans of New Guinea, being lighter in colour and actively made, but decidedly a lower type of humanity. The men wear no clothing whatever, but the women have an apology for a grass petticoat. It cannot, strictly speaking, be called a petticoat. However, they are not quite nude.

In the evening, the conversation turning on boats, we did not fail to sound the praises of our little craft, that had carried us so far and so safely. The others, on the other hand, did not forget to crack up the merits of the *Atafu*. After a lot of bragging on both sides it was decided to settle the differences of opinion by a race between the rival vessels. We, I may say in passing, were merely chaffing, but the others were evidently in grim earnest. The race was

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fixed to take place in the morning at 10.30, the course from Mioko to Ralume, New Britain. The distance was 20 miles, and our vessel being only one-third the size of the *Atafu*, we received half an hour start. The stakes were £5 a side, but two or three private bets were made in addition. The rules to be observed during the race were taken down in writing by the manager and his assistant. One of the rules was "that no oar was to be used throughout the race."

Great interest was evinced by them in the approaching contest, and the conditions were duly signed by both parties. The captain and owners of the *Atafu* were quite confident of victory, and ridiculed the idea of our having the ghost of a chance. It must be recollected that our cutter was but 12 tons, and what chance would she have against one of 37 tons? We still believed it was simply chaff, and that no race was intended, but the following morning they soon disabused us of that idea. Seeing that active preparations for the match were taking place on board the *Atafu*, it behoved us to be on the alert. We went on board the

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S—l, got all the sails and sheets in good order, rigged up an awning as a square sail, set our topsail, and by a little after 10 o'clock had everything ready for a start. Now that we were in for it we determined to do our best and see if, notwithstanding our insignificant appearance, we could not lower the "Mioko" flag, and lessen their conceit.

A fresh south-easter was blowing, but happily not too strong to prevent us crowding every stitch of canvas on her. The land of New Britain was dimly visible in the distance, and a dewy freshness filled the air. Had we made it, the weather could not have been more propitious. Our British ensign was run up to the masthead, the anchor hoisted in, and precisely at 10.30 Mr. H——r, having taken up a position on the wharf, fired his revolver as a signal to be off. We were close in to the shore, and as there was no room to manœuvre, our skipper, S——g, sang out, "Get out an oar and pull the bows round."

The command was promptly executed, her head paid round, the oars were thrown down

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the hold, and like a greyhound from the leash she bounded forth, straining every nerve and sinew to be first in at the "death."

The *Atafu*, in full sail, soon appeared in sight, and great was our anxiety to discover whether she gained on us.

We held our lead, however, and at 1.30 p.m. dropped anchor off Ralume, within a few yards of a reef. We had the sails furled, the ropes coiled, and the "Billy" boiled, when the *Atafu* "came to" abreast of us, 35 minutes behind.

We lost no time in boarding her in order to sympathise with them in their defeat. To our surprise they would not acknowledge that they had been beaten. Upon our demanding an explanation, they stated that, in consequence of our having used an oar at the commencement of the race, we had lost. We had used the oar thoughtlessly, but, as they evidently wished to make some money out of us, we promptly paid them the stakes, which, however, they refused in the end to accept. Practically speaking, they had been beaten on their own merits, and

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evidently did not relish the fact. They had come specially from "Mioko" for the race, and returned home the same day, considerably crest-fallen and with a higher opinion of our little craft than they had had hitherto.

"Ralume" boasts of a splendid plantation, the property of Mrs. F——h, who is one of the best business women I have ever met. She does all the correspondence, keeps the accounts, and personally superintends the work of the plantation. Of course she has a manager, and a very capable one too, but still she believes in having an eye over all. She has been established in Ralume for ten years, and during that period has worked wonders. They have 500 acres under cultivation, with any amount of back country attached. The land is undulating, and the soil, which is very rich, is cultivated right down to the sea. There is a good deal of lime-stone in the neighbourhood, and the appearance of the country for miles along the coast is very beautiful. The land is not rugged, like that of New Ireland, but has more the appearance of an English park.

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Twenty miles from the coast there is a range of mountains, the country beyond which is supposed by the natives to be inhabited by a race of dwarfs. This, however, has been proved to be a myth. Cotton, coffee, and coco-nuts are grown extensively on the plantation. There are six cotton gins working every day, and they are worked by black labourers, imported from the South Seas. I inspected several bales of cotton which were ready for shipment. They appeared of very good quality, and the manager, Mr. P—, told me it realized from 1s. to 1s. 3d. per pound in Sydney.

There are over 150 labourers working on the plantation, most of them from the Solomon Islands and the remainder from New Ireland. Not a single native of New Britain was among the number, as they will not work except when away from their own country.

Occasionally some of the New Ireland boys attempt to escape and return to their homes. These however are the exceptions, as the majority appeared satisfied with their lot. They were evidently well cared for, as those

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that I saw were in first-rate condition, and as jolly as sandboys.

The Stars and Stripes were flying at the peak of the flagstaff in front of Mrs. F—h's house, in honour of her late husband, who was an American. She herself is a half-caste Samoan, and as intelligent and accomplished a woman as any European.

The house is situated on the top of a high cliff, commanding a magnificent view, with Blanche Bay a few miles to the north-west, the Duke of York Islands in the distance, and to the eastward loomed the towering mountains of New Ireland.

On the far side of Blanche Bay, the eye is arrested by two mountains named respectively the "Mother" and "Daughter," conspicuous from their peculiar formation.

The "Daughter" is the smaller of the two, and is apparently nestling by the side of the other. Hence no doubt their names.

There is considerable volcanic activity in this neighbourhood. Close by the mountains mentioned above, a cloud of smoke, distinctly

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visible, is to be seen issuing from a fissure, which is sufficient evidence of volcanic disturbance.

For my part I should not be surprised at any time to read in the news of the day that an eruption or earthquake had taken place on the shores of Blanche Bay.

Should that day come, which I trust will never be the case, then adieu to fair "Ralume" and its fair inhabitants, good-bye to "Matupi" and its living occupants. Blanche Bay would be no more. Who can foresee the wondrous changes in the configuration of the land that would be wrought by such a convulsion of nature?

God forbid that it should ever occur, but those living in the vicinity of Blanche Bay cannot but remember the terrible upheavals that took place only a few years ago on the north-east coast of New Ireland. They say "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," but I must confess I should hesitate before purchasing a 999 or even a 99 years' lease of land in that part of New Britain.

Ascending a steep path, we soon arrived at

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the Homestead, and were fortunate in finding Mrs. F—h at home.

She had been much surprised at the sight of our cutter flying the British flag, and was most curious to learn from what country we had come or whether we had dropped from the clouds. We willingly satisfied her curiosity, and told her that we had come on a piratical expedition and in search of any adventures that might befall us.

The house was the model of a planter's home, and everything about it bore the mark of refinement.

The arrangement of the rooms, the garden, the flowers, the ornaments, the piano with its tomes of music and song, the books, indicative of the reader's taste, all told us that.

To us three, who were used to rough companions, and had not seen the face of a woman, save in New Guinea, for many months, it was most refreshing to meet Mrs. F—h. We felt we had reached the borders of Paradise, and our only regret was that our stay must necessarily be a short one.

We were all seated on the verandah, including

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Mrs. F—h, and enjoying our cigarettes and lager beer, when one of the "Houris" of Paradise arrived on the scene, and was formally introduced to us by the hostess as Miss G—e. Her appearance completely took our breath away. My friend, S—g was struck dumb with admiration, and no wonder, for she was a girl of transcendent beauty. I had often read of "Houris," but had never, until now, seen one in the flesh!

Can I describe her?

I fear not with justice. There is as much difference between my description and the girl herself as there is between a corpse and one who is alive.

To begin with, she had just reached her nineteenth year. She was of medium height, having an oval face with beautiful soft dark eyes guarded by long dark eyelashes; a clear olive complexion, with the bust of a Venus, and with supple limbs like alabaster. Draped in a simple morning gown, which showed to advantage the graceful outlines of her voluptuous figure, she stepped forth like one fresh from the Garden of

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Eden, and held out her hand to greet us. Was it to be wondered at that my friend was enchanted by the vision, when two such hard-hearted mortals as K—h and I were sensibly affected?

Mrs. F—h pioneered us over the plantation, and explained to us everything of interest. She took great pride in her property, and well she might. She thoroughly understood the management of a plantation, as she had had experience of such matters in Samoa, where many years ago her father had been a planter.

We met here Count Pfeil, a German in the service of the Government, who acted as Customs House officer, etc. He and the Judge lived on a small island not far from "Mioko." He had the use of a good whale-boat, in which he visited the different plantations, etc., to collect the taxes imposed by the German Government. He was a young man of about 28 years of age, very handsome and with an erect carriage. He was of high birth, but poor, so had accepted a Government berth in the Bismarck Archipelago, receiving as salary £500 per annum.

He was well-known as an explorer, and not

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long ago, at the head of 100 blacks, had penetrated some distance into the interior of New Ireland.

He found the natives most hostile. They attacked his rear column, killing several of his men. He attempted to retaliate, but they outmanœuvred him. He spoke of the country as very mountainous and rugged, with good indications of minerals. He expressed his astonishment at our not having anchored off his island and reported ourselves to the representatives of the Government. We assumed child-like ignorance of such things; the truth was we had purposely passed the place, as the anchorage there is bad, and furthermore, it was rather out of our way. He was very gentlemanly, but informed us that he would have to impose a fine for our breach of etiquette, and that he would board our vessel on the morrow. We thanked him and he departed.

The manager of the plantation, Mr. P——, lived in a pretty little house, 100 yards or so beyond the owner's.

Both he and his wife were most hospitable.

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They had two dear little children, a boy and a girl, with whom the New Britain climate seemed to agree uncommonly well. Both children were born on the plantation. A well-kept lawn adorned the front of the house, and beds of gorgeous flowers and shrubs, and trees of all kinds enhanced the beauty of the surroundings. A delicious scent pervaded the atmosphere. Nature is nowhere so lavish as in the tropics. There is such a wealth of foliage, such a variety of colour, such a cloudless atmosphere—three things so foreign to colder latitudes. In the words of the poet, Milton, it was "Paradise Regained."

Just as we had worked ourselves into a sentimental mood, in keeping with the time and place, dinner was announced. Sentiment fled, and the practical side of life presented itself to us. To live, we must eat; so, nothing loth, we repaired to the dining-room, where dinner awaited us.

I had the distinguished honour of sitting on the right hand of the fair Hebe, Miss G——e, whilst my friend, to his disappointment, was placed next to the hostess.

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My companion was charming, not only on account of her loveliness and natural grace, but also because of her animation and conversational powers.

She had received a first-rate education at one of the leading schools in Sydney, and had left it a year ago. She knew German thoroughly, was an accomplished musician, and had the voice of a nightingale. And yet she was a half-caste Samoan.

Three lightly-clad—I might say, very lightly-clad—young waitresses were in attendance at dinner. Two of them were natives of New Ireland, the third, a native of the Admiralty Islands. They had been with our hostess for two years, and had to remain for three years longer. They were comely to look upon, and made excellent domestics.

They say—"After dinner, smoke awhile,"—so we lit our cigars and cigarettes and burnt a sacrifice to our patron saint, St. Nicotine. Later on in the evening, Mrs. P——n, the manager's wife, put in an appearance; and as there were now three ladies, dancing was suggested. Mrs.

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F——h kindly played on the piano, whilst we danced on the verandah with the others.

Seeing that my friend was quite overcome by the charms of the belle of the evening, I only danced with her once, devoting most of my attention to Mrs. P——.

We had songs, both German and English; solos, duets, trios and quartettes.

What a night we had! At midnight, I suggested the expediency of going on board our cutter; but, no, my friend would not hear of it. He was utterly infatuated. Ten minutes more, and he would come—but the ten minutes developed into sixty—until at last I managed to drag him away from the alluring spot.

The three of us then regretfully bade our friends good-night, and repaired on board the cutter.

Arrived at the jetty, we hailed, in loud tones, Tokaiakus, the Dwarf—who was supposed to be in charge of the vessel. Not a sound came in response. We hailed him again—and again no answer.

Our dinghy was alongside the cutter, so we could not reach her without swimming.

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After shouting ourselves hoarse, and consigning the dwarf to warmer regions, his ugly head appeared above the bulwarks, and he came in the dinghy—into which we gladly stepped—and were quickly rowed on board.

We felt rather tired, and soon sought our couches—each of us dreaming that he was in Paradise, attended by a bevy of Samoan damsels.

In the morning we received a visit from Count Pfeil.

He examined our "papers" and inquired what firearms we had on board, and if we carried dynamite. Having given satisfactory answers to his several queries he stated that he had decided to impose on us a fine of £1 that being the lowest amount he could inflict for our evasion of the German regulations.

We paid the fine and were invited to visit him on our departure from New Britain. We politely accepted his invitation, but did not give him a call, as it would have been too far out of our track. I have met, at one time or another, a good many Germans, official and otherwise,

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but for gentlemanly bearing and courtesy of manner, I unhesitatingly give the palm to Count Pfeil.

We had nearly two tons of flour on hand which we were anxious to get rid of, as if kept much longer it would go bad. Mrs. F——h relieved us of one ton, and the remainder we sold to a German missionary and a small trader.

We had numerous visitors during the day, three of them from "Matupi," a large plantation the other side of Blanche Bay, owned by a German. The head station is situated in the centre of a native village and on the plantation there is a large herd of cattle. All were curious to know on what business we had come. They had an idea that we wished to trade in the neighbourhood, but such was not our intention. They wished us to come up to "Matupi" and see them, but, much as we should have enjoyed it, we refused as we were anxious to get back to New Guinea. We had only one day to spare, and for that we had arranged a pic-nic.

We took "Tokaiakus" on shore and introduced him to the ladies. They were much

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interested in him, for they had never seen a full-grown native of so small a stature. "Tokaiakus" did not altogether like the amount of attention paid him.

Several of the New Britain natives surrounded him, and with a piece of cane measured him all over. His expression of disgust was ludicrous, so to gratify him I said he must not take offence, as the natives were ignorant and knew no better. He smiled one of his beatific smiles in approbation of my sentiments.

Through Mr. P——,who can speak the language, we informed the New Britainites that we had obtained him from the country beyond the mountains, and this they implicitly believed. Mr. P——who is a good amateur photographer, photographed him in company with his little daughter in the act of handing him a banana. The likeness was an excellent one, but strange to say the natives of New Guinea fail to grasp the meaning of a photo. "Tokaiakus" was greatly astonished at the sight of two milch cows and a horse. This was the first time he had ever seen anything of the kind. He had a

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wholesome dread of the cattle, and was much surprised on hearing that they were good to eat. He imagined the horse to be a big dog, as the latter animal is common to New Guinea. This was also the first time he had seen a white woman, and as they were kind to him he was favourably impressed.

Hearing that a boat was leaving early in the morning for the native markets in Blanche Bay, I expressed a desire to go in her. The boat, manned by twelve South Sea Islanders, labourers on the plantation, called for me at 4.0 a.m. In Blanche Bay, which was distant from our anchorage about five miles, three markets are held every week.

A market is also held on the plantation at Ralume. On these occasions from 100 to 200 natives congregate on the beach. They arrive at sunrise, having journeyed through the bush a distance of 12 miles. The women, who are heavily laden with huge baskets of yams, etc., do the whole of the marketing, the men simply looking on. They seat themselves in a semi-circle beneath the palm trees, removing their

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loads and spreading out their contents. The sight was a novel one to me. We arrived at the trysting place in good time, having to wait fully half-an-hour before the cavalcade made its appearance. Presently a low sound was heard produced by the crackling of the leaves and twigs, when through a narrow opening in the forest, a long line of women in single file was exposed to view. They numbered fully 100, each carrying a heavy load on her head. They comprised all sizes and ages, and varied in ugliness. Most of them had strong, gaunt frames; they looked for all the world like beasts of burden. Their appearance was rather repulsive. They were as nude as on the day of their birth. They strongly reminded me of a string of pack-mules wending their way through the Queensland bush. No sooner were they seated than their tongues were loosened. They were not too tired to talk, notwithstanding their long tramp. All were provided with water bottles, the water for which they obtained by digging small holes in the sand not two yards from the sea. They had also baskets containing balls of red clay,

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which they use for colouring their hair; none of them were tattooed. From their appearance and the absolute nakedness of both men and women I place them on a far lower scale than the natives of New Guinea. The men, who are strongly built, with rather forbidding countenances, are impregnated with laziness. They do absolutely nothing; while the women are engaged trading, the men stand some distance apart and do not converse with them. They employ their time for hours together in picking up the soft mud on the beach, rolling it in their hands into the form of a ball, then throwing it into the sea in order to watch the eddy made, and repeat the task *ad infinitum*.

I watched them for a time but soon wearied of it. I busied myself buying yams from the women. You have to pay one stick of trade tobacco for six yams. They prefer to receive the native money called "Tambu." It is worth two shillings per six feet. It is formed of tiny white shells with the centre cut out, and is a rare commodity.

With this money you can buy anything you

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like, a wife if desired. It is as much a standard coin of the realm as the sovereign is of the British Empire.

New Britain is the only savage country I have been in where the natives have a true money currency of a standard value. Some of the men wear this money in circles round their neck, and a few of them are the happy possessors of a mile of it. This money, which is called by the natives "Dewarra," is never used as an ornament but solely as a medium of exchange. The men clay their hair all colours, red, yellow, etc., it has rather a pleasing effect. They look as if they wore wigs.

Many of them curl their hair, forming it into a mop of twisted string-like plaits which hang all round their head in the shape of a fringe.

Referring to the natives of New Britain Count Pfeil remarked: "They are for the most part a tall, powerful set of people, but with all their strength they are entirely deficient in that graceful appearance which characterises so many negro peoples. Their figures are often plump, and the colour of their skin is

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that of a pure negro mixed with a tinge of red. Their hair is crisp, and always cleverly coated with a mixture of ochre, chalk, or clay. Their faces present a coarse, broad mouth, a flat nose, and very little expression.

The New Irelanders on the other hand are small and neatly built, their countenances are expressive and their disposition lively and cunning. The hair is dressed in a manner which makes it resemble an old Greek helmet. In New Britain and in the central part of New Ireland there is the custom common to both of dividing the inhabitants of a village, as regards marriage, into two groups, "maramara," and "pikalaba." Marriages of individuals within one of these groups would certainly be punished with death for the woman, and for the man with a heavy penalty of "dewarra." The children born in wedlock belong to the group of which the mother was a member. Both divisions regard a species of locust with special reverence. Their dead are either buried in the house or thrown into the water. In the north-west of New Ireland the practice is

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different. There the body of a chief is burnt upon a special wooden scaffold. The calcined bones are then collected by the heir and preserved as a memorial. Cannibalism is general thoughout the country, and the inhabitants are not ashamed to speak of it. The sagas and myths of the people of New Britain deal mostly with obscene matters, although every piece of obscenity is carefully covered up, and is described in euphemisms and circumlocutions.

Having purchased a couple of tons of yams we rowed home against a very strong tide, reaching Ralume at 5 o'clock in the evening. We dined with Mrs. F——h the same night (Friday), and, as we were going away on the Monday, we arranged to hold our picnic on Saturday. We decided to go to Pigeon Island, half-way between here and Mioko. The ladies promised to find the eatables, we the vessel and drinkables. We made the vessel as comfortable as possible, and spread clean mats on wooden boxes, which had to do service as seats for our fair visitors. Our two natives

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were stationed at the gangway as a guard of honour, the British colours were run up, and we awaited the arrival of our distinguished guests.

At noon we received them on board. The party comprised Mrs. F——h, Miss G——e, the overseer's wife, and the three young native maids, already mentioned. They had brought with them fowls, hams, tongues, jellies, and a host of other good things, as an auctioneer would say, "too numerous to mention." Our vessel had never before carried so valuable a freight. Upon reaching Pigeon Island we were obliged to place the anchor on the reef, owing to the great depth of water beyond.

The island is well-wooded, and just the spot for a picnic. It was uninhabited, so we had it all to ourselves.

We had great difficulty in getting the dinghy over the reef, as, except at high tide, the water is shallow.

With some trouble we landed all the goods and paraphernalia, including a case of lager beer. The ladies had sensibly provided them-

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selves with a couple of hammocks, as we did not intend to return until the next day (Sunday).

In a small clearing in the bush the dinner was set out. We had the ground for a table, and on it a tablecloth, an unknown luxury to us, and the canopy of Heaven for a roof. Here you are in the tropics. The night was warm, the mosquitoes numerous. They did not trouble us much, as we had served a long apprenticeship to their delicate attentions. It is only "new chums" who suffer from their attacks.

The moon was well matured, and lit up the darkness of the forest, casting a weird glamour o'er the scene. The beauty of the night recalled to my mind those trenchant lines of Southey:

"How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of Heaven.
In full-orbed glory yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark blue depths;
Beneath her steady ray
The desert circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky;
How beautiful is night!

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A fire was soon burning brightly, on which a couple of pigeons we had shot were roasting. The three maids, offering a great contrast to the rest by their swarthy skins, were flitting to and fro, getting everything ready for our *al fresco* repast. We all laid to with a will; it was astonishing the rapid way in which the viands disappeared. For a time nothing could be heard except the tinkling of glasses and the clinking of knives and forks.

Dinner over, Samoan mats and rugs were spread on the ground beneath the shade of a group of palms, upon which we all reclined, smoking the kalumet of peace, the ladies joining us with cigarettes. The time passed rapidly until three in the morning, when the three native maids, assisted by two of the ladies, gave, in our honour, a representation of a Samoan dance. The dance was in harmony with the locality. We were delighted with the exhibition. In the early morn we had a dip in the sea, then went in quest of pigeons, but only obtained half-a-dozen. The ladies, meanwhile, were engaged collecting oysters on the

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rocks. After having exhausted the beauties of the island, we all returned on board and sailed for Ralume, reaching that place at five o'clock on Sunday afternoon. We accompanied our fair companions to the plantation, where we bade them an affectionate farewell, as we could not prolong our stay another day.

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CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN VOYAGE.

THE south-east "trades" were still blowing, and seeing no chance of their abatement, we regretfully left the shores of Ralume Bay.

In St. George's Channel we met with constant baffling winds, which greatly retarded our progress. On some days we made no more than a mile, the strong currents causing us to make considerable leeway.

We sailed close in to the shores of New Britain and back again to New Ireland, and so it continued day after day. We thought we should never lose sight of the Duke of York Islands, and had half a mind to run back to Ralume. The days were scorchingly hot, the decks not fit to stand upon. We were obliged every few minutes to throw buckets of water on them to enable us to move about, and to prevent the seams from opening. It was anything but a pleasure having to steer for four

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hours beneath such a sun. Down below in the little cabin it was just as bad, more stifling, if possible. How we longed for night to cool our fevered brows!

Not far from here, on the north-east coast of New Ireland, poor Charlie Hunstein met his fate. I met him on several occasions. Not long since, in 1889, he, with some others, journeyed from Finsch-hafen to New Ireland on a botanical expedition. He arrived there safely, but in a day or two a terrible earthquake took place, swallowing up the unfortunate Hunstein and his followers. What a terrible destiny, to perish in such a catastrophe without the chance of a struggle for life!

I saw the captain of one of the German New Guinea Company's steamers. He told me he was in the habit of steaming past the spot on his way from Finsch-hafen to the Bismarck Archipelago. Just after the disaster he was taking the accustomed route when, to his astonishment, the usual landmarks were nowhere to be seen. He therefore worked out his position, and discovered that there must have been some fearful

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agency at work to alter the configuration of the land in such a manner. The whole geography of the neighbourhood had been completely transformed. A vast expanse of land had been converted into water.

The suddenness with which such calamities occur is astonishing.

To-day everything wears its wonted appearance, but who knows what to-morrow may bring forth? what changes may take place in Nature?

To-day a man is in robust health, proud of his strength. To-morrow all this has vanished, and the living man has become an inanimate mass.

Our progress continued slow, until at last we sighted Cape St. George, the southern extremity of New Ireland. The locality has an historic interest.

Ten years ago, in the latter part of the year 1880, the ill-fated expedition organised by the notorious Marquis de Ray landed in the vicinity. The Marquis de Ray was a French nobleman living in Paris. He formed a gigantic scheme for colonizing New Ireland, intending, as he stated, to create there a New France. He

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caused grand plans to be executed, showing the different lots or farms for sale — smiling farms, with paddocks of grass, ready for occupation, and whole families of French farmers and peasantry sold up what property they possessed, and cheerfully paid their money deposits in Paris, thinking they were going to a land full of promise, where they would settle on their newly-acquired lands with their families and grow prosperous. Poor deluded creatures! Little did they dream of the fate in store for them. Little did they know the state of the country to which they were bound, and that they were hurrying from the frying-pan into the fire. It is astounding with what ease people are gulled by the plausible representations of an adventurous schemer.

Two large vessels, the S.S. *India*, and S.S. *Genie*, were fitted out for the expedition, each of them carrying about 300 emigrants. What a country to attempt to colonize! The Marquis had evidently picked out the most inhospitable place on the map. A wild, mountainous country, a deadly climate, and populated by

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dense numbers of ferocious and bloodthirsty savages! Not a white man on the island. And it was to make their living in such a land that these people had broken up their homes, converted all their possessions into money in order to buy farms there, and farming implements, such as ploughs, harrows, etc., with which to cultivate them. What did the Marquis care if they were all ruined, so long as he had the amount of their deposits safely in his pockets?

After many privations on the voyage, owing to the scarcity of provisions, they were landed in New Ireland in August. Great was their astonishment on beholding the country of their adoption, and great was their indignation against the cunning Marquis de Ray, who had so cruelly deceived them.

Many sickened and died, others were starved.

They implored to be taken away from the polluted spot, and to be landed in Australia. Some were removed to an island called Liki-Liki, where many of them died, and upon their fate becoming known, the remainder, broken in

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health and destitute of money, were landed at Noumea, New Caledonia.

There the storekeepers and traders generously supplied them with food, but found it impossible to get them employment. A steamer was sent by the Government to bring them on to Sydney, where they were placed in the immigration depôt until such time as they found employment.

The unhappy immigrants could not speak a word of English, but after a time they were drafted off up country, where they were employed as farm labourers.

What had become of the miscreant who had caused all this ruin and misery?

He was in France, living on the proceeds of his ill-gotten gains. Upon the true state of affairs leaking out, the Marquis de Ray was arrested, tried before the Tribunal in Paris, and sentenced to several years' imprisonment. Well for him that he escaped being hanged. This should be a warning to would-be emigrants to learn some particulars of the country in which they intend to settle, before embarking on the

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voyage. Let us hope that we shall never again have to record so ill-starred an expedition as the one launched by the French marquis.

Once clear of St. George's Channel, we seemed to lose the strong currents, and consequently made better way.

Returning was a very different matter from coming from New Guinea. We had now been four days at sea, and during the whole of that time had been beating about in the channel. We had still a long distance to travel, and from all appearances it would be several days before we reached our destination. It was of no use crying out against our luck. Head winds were the order of the day, so we consoled ourselves with the thought that the same winds had been favourable to us not long before. We amused ourselves by conversing with our two native companions and perfecting ourselves in their language.

In the evening, after supper, the dwarf graciously entertained us, telling us all about his people and their ways, and singing New Guinea carols.

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He had a pleasant voice and kept good time.

Many of his songs were improvised on the spot, and he often introduced our names into them.

It is marvellous the power with which the natives of New Guinea compose verses.

He had a curious custom.

Having filled his bau-bau (pipe) with tobacco, and lighted it ready for use, he invariably made an incantation, something after the style of grace before meat. This was his way of offering thanks either to us or the "gods," for the plentiful supply of tobacco.

We were six days out of sight of land, and when in mid-ocean, I turned to the dwarf and asked him in which direction lay his home, the island of "Egum." Without hesitation he correctly pointed out the quarter, although, at the time, our vessel was several points out of her direct course. The bump of locality is highly developed in them.

As with certain animals, this instinct with natives is very strong. We had been absent from "Egum" three weeks, so our little friend

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was getting a bit home-sick and anxious to rejoin his family.

One day we were travelling at a speed of five knots an hour, when, following in our wake, we descried a huge shark. He followed us for some time in a most determined manner, hoping no doubt to receive some of the contents of our cooking pot. We did not disturb him at once, as we were interested in watching his two little satellites. He was accompanied by two inseparable companions, known as "pilot fish." They were less than a foot long, and beautifully marked by tiny, light-coloured spots. They swam just over him, always keeping in the one position. They were evidently his firm friends. I had often heard of these strange little fishes, but this was the first time I had seen them in attendance upon his "sharkship."

As I gazed, I could not help wondering what office they performed, and for what reason the shark had chosen them for his companions.

What bond could there exist between two such totally distinct species of fish? the one strong, powerful and noted for its voracity, the

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other for its diminutiveness, beauty of form and weakness? Maybe, the pilot fish in some mysterious way gives warning of danger to the shark. I know not. It must be of some service to him, otherwise he would not fraternize with the little creature.

In the river Nile, where crocodiles abound, it is said a tiny bird* takes up its abode in the mouth of the crocodile, and acts as his friend. At any rate the crocodile recognizes the friendship by never attempting to molest its winged companion.

Truly the works of Nature are wonderful and full of mystery!

Although we respected the pilot fish and had no feelings of hatred against them, the shark was sentenced to death. One of us got a Winchester rifle, and at the first shot riddled the head of the monster, his two little comrades escaping unhurt. The shark, without a struggle, soon turned belly upwards, and before we could reach him, sank beneath the waves. What

* "Trochilus." For fuller account, see Herodotus, Vol. I., Bk. 2, Chapter 68.

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became of his little friends it is impossible to say, for we saw them no more.

I wonder if they lamented the death of their late lord, or whether they sought comfort in the reflection that for every dead shark there were hundreds of living ones.

The day being very hot, I was in the act of lowering a couple of buckets over the side to get a supply of salt water to cool the decks with, when somehow or other the rope attached to them slipped out of my hand, and down went the buckets to the bottom of the ocean. This was most annoying, as we were now reduced to one bucket.

Sailing in mid-ocean, and having no coast to steer by, we "took the sun" at noon each day, in order to determine our position and keep our course or alter it accordingly.

By our calculations we should soon sight North Island, as we had now been five days out at sea.

We had no chronometer on board, so we could not be certain of our exact position.

On the evening of the eighth day out from

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Ralume, New Britain, we found ourselves ten miles to leeward of North Island. We rectified our course and, travelling night and day, beat our way between a perfect nest of islands, at times heaving to in order to trade with the natives who came alongside in their canoes.

Without meeting with any misadventure, we reached the anchorage at "Egum," on Wednesday evening, having been ten weary days on the voyage.

Long before we had arrived at the anchorage, the rocks near the beach were covered with the naked forms of our friends. Our cutter had already been recognized, and its name was being shouted from one native to the other.

To their delight we had returned in safety from our perilous voyage, for did we not carry two distinguished members of their race on board, namely "Tokaiakus" and "Sindiwaia"?

There was much shaking of hands, and they appeared anxious to hear of the lands we had visited and the sights that we had seen.

We landed our dwarf and his young friend in the bosom of their families, and I can safely

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aver they kept the natives of the island alive for many weeks with the account of their travels and adventures and the wonderful sights they had seen.

We spent two or three days here in order to refit.

We commissioned the natives to get us a turtle, promising to give them 15 sticks of trade tobacco for it.

They started off in one of their big canoes for a small island about seven miles away.

They stayed on the island all night, but were unsuccessful. Being anxious to earn the tobacco, and knowing that "no turtle no tobacco," was our motto, they remained another night, and succeeded in capturing a huge turtle weighing close on four cwt.

Their plan is to choose a clear night. They then lie in wait near the beach; the turtle leaves the sea for a moonlight walk, when the natives, armed with big sticks, rush upon it and turn it over on its back, in which position it is helpless. They have a cruel practice of burning the shell off the turtle when alive. We were

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much annoyed with them at this, but it was too late to expostulate, as we had not been witness to the practice. The turtle, which was a "green one," was placed on its back in the canoe and eventually brought to us minus the shell.

We felt much inclined not to buy it, but fresh meat is not to be despised.

When you have lived on tinned meats for some months, it is only natural that you should desire a change. In a turtle there is truly fish, flesh and fowl.

I don't know whether any of my readers have ever tasted a fresh turtle steak or not, but if they have not, my advice to them is *do* so at the first opportunity, for it is delicious, and superior even to the acknowledged rump steak.

We intended to keep the turtle alive until we reached China Straits, so as to dine off it on Christmas day. A turtle will keep alive in a boat without anything to eat for several weeks. It is only necessary to occasionally dash a bucket of salt water over its head to keep it cool.

Owing to its weight we had some difficulty in

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hauling it on board. We then lowered it into the hold, where we placed some wet cloths under its head.

It had to remain on its back for the next week and then its career in this world would be over.

How it did sigh to be sure! It seemed to have an inkling of its impending fate.

During the time we were awaiting the arrival of the turtle, we painted the vessel. We painted the bottom boards a chocolate-brown and the rest a dark green. All the masts and spars were scraped and oiled; the cabin painted inside and out.

Everything was put in proper trim, and when finished she would have done credit to the Thames Yacht Club.

She looked a perfect picture, with her raking topmast and the little 10-foot dinghy, painted a dark brown, towing astern. No one would have believed that she was engaged in the Bêche-de-mer fishery, but then you see we took a pride in keeping her clean and trim. We had never been accustomed, like some, to wallow in dirt.

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Cleanliness is just as cheap as dirt, and much healthier.

The next day I was introduced to the native princess already mentioned in a previous chapter. She had on a lovely chaplet of wild flowers. For the rest her dress was plain and simple. As is customary with the Court ladies of these parts, she wore a low dress, even in the daytime. She was decidedly good-looking, and had courtly manners. We also saw her father. He was one of the best specimens of New Guinea natives. He had a frank, open countenance, and never condescended to pester us for tobacco. What was the result? Why, we willingly gave him some, as he offered a pleasing contrast to most of our acquaintances.

What a variety there is in the human race!

In native communities, as in European, individuals differ widely. Some are naturally of a vindictive character, cruel, sordid and selfish, their evil traits clearly defined in their countenances, whilst others are naturally open, frank, generous and unselfish, their good traits reflected in the mirror of their faces.

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Having said good-bye to our two native companions and their friends, we weighed anchor and, sailing once more for China Straits, arrived off Samarai on Christmas Eve, feeling all the better for our expedition.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE "TRIAL."

WE landed our turtle, killed it, and then cut it up ready for our Christmas dinner on the following day. In our absence, about a dozen diggers had arrived on the island from St. Aignan and Sud-Est. Many of them were suffering from that dreadful scourge, malarial fever. We had returned in good health, but could not tell the day or hour when we, too, might be struck down by the dreaded fiend.

Surrounded as we were by sick and groaning men, our Christmas, instead of being a joyful one, was gloomy in the extreme. The air was stifling, the heat unbearable, and a sickly miasma was rising from the rank vegetation. It is not surprising, therefore, that our spirits were damped by the surroundings.

I had often suffered from the effects of malaria, so could sympathise with the victims. When laid low with it, to use a

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colloquial phrase, you do not care "who wins the cup." All interest in life has departed. When at its height, should any one take hold of you and throw you into the sea, you would not have the energy or the wish to utter a protest. I have seen ladies suffering from sea-sickness affected in the same way. At such a time, this mundane existence of ours has no attraction for them. They simply long for death to put an end to their misery.

This only shows how necessary it is to try to the best of your ability to keep up your spirits, for if once you give in it will not be long before you are removed to a better and healthier sphere. One of the diggers, Peter Carlson, a Swede by birth, was very bad, vomiting every half-hour.

He had recently returned from St. Aignan, an island 100 miles to windward, where he had been digging for gold.

He, together with two companions and a native boy, had arrived in a small cutter. When half-way he fell overboard, and would have been drowned had it not been for the plucky

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conduct of the native youth, who promptly jumped in after him, and with the aid of a piece of wood kept him afloat until the cutter came up with them. Strange to say, a few weeks later he left Samarai in the same cutter on his way back to St. Aignan, and, being a bit of a sailor, had charge of the tiller. A mountainous sea was running, and the night was dark, when suddenly a sea was shipped which carried him and the tiller overboard. That was the last seen of the doomed man. It is strange that having been saved on the outward trip he should be lost on the return journey. His death was much regretted, as he was respected and well liked by all who knew him.

It will be remembered, as stated in the sixth chapter, that on the 16th of November, the Governor (Sir Wm. Macgregor), in company with a number of diggers, went in the schooner *Hygeia* to Chad's Bay for the purpose of punishing the natives for the murder of Captain Ancell. He pulled down several of their houses, smashed up their canoes, destroyed their plantations, and took possession of their fishing-

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nets. Two months were occupied in capturing the natives, the last and principal malefactor being brought into Samarai on the 16th of January, 1889. The Government steamer *Albatross*, from Thursday Island, had been despatched to Milne Bay to bring down some of the "Taubadas," or leading men of the village, and one or two native witnesses, as the trial was fixed for Friday, the 18th January.

Numerous vessels were in the harbour (China Straits), the s.s. *Albatross*, schooners *Hygeia* and *Lucy and Adelaide*, besides other crafts of all shapes and sizes. The human race was well represented, there being all the colours of the rainbow—red, black, yellow and white.

The morning of the 18th dawned radiant with sunshine, not a cloud in the sky, and a cool, gentle breeze blowing from the west.

The island seemed to have shaken off its lethargy for once. All was bustle and activity; men arrayed in glittering uniforms were hurrying to and fro, fraught with important business. Natives clad in bright new pocket-handkerchiefs were strolling down the stately avenue of coco-

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palms intent on witnessing the festive scene. It had all the appearance of a gala day, the only thing wanting was a fife and drum band.

As the clock struck 10, a detachment of "Royal marines" was landed from the *Albatross* and *Hygeia*, armed to the teeth, and marched to the prison.

The governor of the gaol and the other officers of state arrived, and, upon the signal being given, the prisoners, eleven in number, were marched, with a strong guard of marines on either flank, to the court, which was held in the Government bungalow. Close upon the rear of the prisoners came the rabble, the whole forming quite a long procession.

Everyone who could spare the time was evidently determined to be present at this the first trial held in the new colony.

People of all grades were there, squatters from the west, traders, fishermen, sailors, diggers and storekeepers, all curious to know if the white man's death would be avenged.

The Court room was well arranged. One end was reserved for the judge, and opposite to

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him were the prisoners. On one side the Royal marines were drawn up, and opposite to them were the captains and officers of the *Albatross* and *Hygeia;* the rest of the mob having to content themselves with squatting on the floor à la native.

The learned Judge (Mr. Winter) and the "Crown Prosecutor" (Mr. Thomson*) took their seats.

Mr. Thomson then read the charge, which was duly interpreted to the accused. The prisoners were undefended.

Ketabu, a boy belonging to "Sariba," acted as interpreter.

Mr. E. G. Edelfelt gave evidence to the effect that on 25th October last he cleared the ketch *Star of Peace,* Captain Ancell, with two boys on board, one a native of the Louisiades, the other of Queensland, for Chad's Bay, for general trading purposes. The first witness called was the boy Charlie, a native of Pig Island, who was one of the boys on the ketch. He spoke English fairly well, and gave his evidence in a

* Son of the late Archbishop of York.

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clear and straightforward manner. He identified most of the prisoners as being those on board when the captain was killed. He was cross-examined by his Honour.

After the captain had been killed, Charlie was taken prisoner and confined in one of the native houses on shore.

He managed, however, to escape from his gaolers, and after some hardships reached Samarai. The other boy, who was a native of Queensland, was not so fortunate.

In attempting to run away, his relentless pursuers attacked him with tomahawks and knives, inflicting terrible wounds. He had a gash in his skull several inches deep. I examined it myself. How he managed to escape death is a mystery to me. The blacks of Queensland are noted for the thickness of their skulls, but this boy beat them all. They left him for dead. He then crawled away and managed somehow to reach "Samarai," 30 miles distant. He was alive, but that was all. He could not speak for several weeks, and when he recovered, he had changed

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from a bright, intelligent boy into a stupid lad.

His speech returned to him, and, practically speaking, he is all right again.

When the cross-examination of Charlie had concluded, Mr. Thomson objected to Ketabu the interpreter, goodness knows why, for he was thoroughly to be relied upon, and suggested that a double interpretation by Kumatti, a native of Milne Bay, and about as big a liar as could well be found, and Mr. English, who is conversant with the "Motu" language, would be more satisfactory.

The Judge, although failing to see the necessity, granted the request, and for the remainder of the trial Messrs. English and Kumatti acted in that capacity. Other witnesses were then called, one of them from the village of Hayomah giving his evidence without fear or favour, the whole of the evidence clearly proving that the prisoners in court were guilty.

His Honour, the Judge, sentenced "Haniwana" and three others, who were the ringleaders, to death, five to one year, and one to

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eighteen months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

One, against whom there was no evidence, was discharged without a stain upon his character, much to his surprise. The Judge then informed the six prisoners that he had given them light sentences owing to this being the first trial held, but that on future occasions prisoners would be dealt with with much greater severity.

The condemned men were then marched, under a strong escort, to their cells, and the crowd dispersed. The following week the four ringleaders were hanged, two of them at Samarai and the remaining two at the village where the tragedy took place. Thus ended this memorable trial and thus was the white man avenged. Had the British authorities treated previous murders in the same vigorous manner we should not now have to mourn the deaths of so many brave and loyal subjects.

A few weeks after the above trial, a report reached Samarai that the cutter *S——l*, in which I had recently returned, had been

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destroyed by the natives of Normanby Island, near Dawson Straits, and that the two on board, S——g and W——, had been murdered. I made enquiries of numerous natives in the district, and all told the same tale, so that we feared it was but too true. We petitioned the Government Agent, Mr. B. A. Hely, who, by-the-way, is a first-rate fellow, to take some active steps in the matter and find out the true state of affairs and, if necessary, to punish the natives.

He decided to charter the lugger *Alice Meade*, and called for volunteers. Two white men (Dick Ede and Richards) and I signified our eagerness to go, so Mr. Hely and we three laid in a stock of rifles and ammunition and set sail in the *Alice Meade* for the scene of the reported outrage. Dawson Straits separates the islands of Ferguson and Normanby, and is distant from Samarai about 80 miles. Nearly a week was occupied in getting there, on account of the difficulties of navigation. We made full enquiries on shore, but could learn nothing of any murder, nor could we find a trace of any wreck.

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We felt convinced that the report was untrue, so returned to Samarai.

Eventually, the cutter turned up all right, and those on board were much amused at the news of their murder.

At this time, I was busy superintending the preparation of copra and pearl-shell for shipment to Queensland. The labour was done by natives, and, like many white men, they require to be watched or they will loaf and "slum" their work.

When engaged in any heavy work, such as carrying bags of copra or cases of shells, they consider it necessary to shout at the top of their voices. This is supposed to help them in their efforts, but I should say it was very exhausting. We often had as many as sixty natives working at the same job. For work of this nature, we paid them, as a rule, at the rate of three sticks of tobacco per day each man. They invariably attempt to impose on you. At the end of the day's labour many present themselves for payment who have not done a stroke of work. Unless you take some precaution, it is difficult

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to avoid imposition, as it is impossible to distinguish all those who have been working from those who have not. My rule is to give to each man a slip of paper with my initials written on it, and from anyone not producing it payment is withheld. Even with these precautions, unless you keep a sharp look out, you are apt to be deceived.

So the days came and went with marvellous rapidity. If busily employed, it is remarkable the way in which time flies.

One evening in March, as I was wandering along the beach, I saw in the distance a small open boat evidently making for the island. Glasses were at once brought to bear on her, for the arrival of any and every boat has a peculiar interest. The boat, or rather half a boat, presently grounded on the beach and the six occupants landed.

Four of them were black men, natives of the New Hebrides, the remaining two, whites. To my astonishment, I discovered in one of the latter an old friend of mine, a Mr. Thompson, whom I had often met in Queensland. He was

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a seafaring man, and at this time was acting as Government Agent on the labour schooner *Myrtle*. The boat they had come in was only 15 feet long, open, and with a square stern, in which they had travelled a distance of sixty miles, having had to row the whole way. They were a shipwrecked crew, and had left their vessel near Dawson Island for the purpose of obtaining assistance at Samarai. The captain of the *Myrtle* had remained on board, and had sent this, the only boat saved, on the above errand.

Having refreshed himself with food and offered a small sacrifice to his favourite god "Bacchus," Mr. Thompson gave us the following interesting particulars of their adventurous voyage:

The *Myrtle*, a labour schooner, commanded by I. Tornaros, an accomplished Greek, left Maryborough (Queensland) for the Solomon Islands on the 1st March. She had on board a Government Agent (Mr. Thompson), a mate and boatswain and a crew of six blacks. She also had six return islanders belonging to the Solomon Group.

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She was a topsail schooner of 136 tons net register, heavily sparred and splendidly fitted up. Her commander had had a great many years' experience in the labour trade in the South Seas and was a first-class navigator.

March, it was be noted, is one of the three hurricane months in those regions, but it does not necessarily follow that a hurricane will occur in that month.

For a time everything went well; the weather was fairly good. We were speculating on the number of recruits we were likely to obtain, and the profits we would make by the voyage, but "*L'homme propose et le Dieu dispose*," and so it was exemplified on this occasion. To our surprise, the wind suddenly changed.

However, the glass did not show any sign of a coming storm. We held on our course as far as practicable, never dreaming for a moment what the future had in store for us.

The *Myrtle* was a strong, staunch vessel, and we had perfect confidence in the seamanship of her captain. The next day the wind veered again and the barometer had fallen considerably.

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Orders were at once given to shorten sail and prepare for the expected gale, but we did not realise that a terrible hurricane was so near at hand.

The wind soon increased to a gale, the barometer fell still lower; we were evidently in for a violent spell. The hatches were battened down; everything loose about the deck was made secure, the boats (four) were doubly lashed, and we stood prepared to do battle with the elements.

The captain now looked anxious, and fearing that we might be running into the jaws of a hurricane, altered the course of the vessel in order to escape from it.

Running away will not always avert the doom, in fact will often embrace it.

A wiser course for us to pursue would have been to strike the topmasts, which would have considerably reduced her top-hamper, "heave to," and quietly await the coming tempest.

Instead of which, we ran right into the centre of the most terrific hurricane it has ever been my lot to encounter. This was not my first

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hurricane, but it is one that I shall never forget as long as I live.

It suddenly burst upon us in all its fury. The wind shrieked and cut you like a knife. It was impossible to look to windward, the force of the wind was so great. The boats hanging in the davits were smashed to pieces, one of them being blown away bit by bit until not a vestige of it was left. The scene was indescribable. Every one believed his last hour had come. Presently the vessel gave a terrible lurch, and on the lee side the bulwarks were five feet under water.

She was beginning to settle when the captain reluctantly roared out "Cut away the masts." The boatswain quickly executed the order, the whole time being in peril of his life, the axe would often be lifted out of his hands, the wind playing with it as if it were paper. At last crash came the masts on deck, the topmast going between the legs of the old mate, and bang through the bulwarks, leaving him, wonderful to relate, unhurt. With the greatest difficulty the lashings of the masts were cut adrift and overboard they went. The boatswain, in cutting

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some of the rigging adrift, received a severe blow from one of the boats as it was clean lifted off the deck by the wind and carried over the bulwarks into the raging sea. He was laid up in his cabin for a fortnight. Having got rid of her heavy spars, the schooner righted herself, but what a wretched spectacle she presented! Stripped of all her beauty, robbed of her tapering spars, what was once a model craft had now become a mere hull.

In a hurricane the sea is never rough, but the surface is one seething mass of foam, with a blinding mist; and the wind shrieks with demoniacal laughter, as if mercilessly proud of its might. The blacks had secreted themselves down below, terrified out of their lives, and praying on their knees to their patron saints. They had completely given themselves up as lost, and for the matter of that, at one time, so had we all. The severity of the hurricane only lasted a few hours, after which a confused sea got up. This made things very uncomfortable, for the ship began to roll heavily, not having her masts to steady her.

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The hurricane over, the grief of Captain Tornaros was heartrending to witness. He was part owner, and he loved his ship.

He had just cleared off all expenses, and had he not met with this disaster, would have made a good profit out of the trip.

We all sympathised with him. He had been 30 years at sea and had survived many storms, but in all his experience he had never seen one to equal this.

We were now several hundred leagues from the nearest land, and in our disabled state it was impossible to proceed on the voyage. We rigged up jury masts, but even then could not travel, except under a favourable wind.

What was to be done?

One of two courses was open to us, either to make for the Queensland coast or for the shores of New Guinea.

Captain Tornaros held a meeting on deck to decide the matter. He pointed out to us the dangers of the two routes, the New Guinea one, in his opinion, being the safer of the two. The danger of the Queensland route was the difficulty

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of navigating a disabled craft through the Great Barrier Reef.

However, there was not much to choose between the two.

After due consideration, the majority of those on board were in favour of making for New Guinea, some 400 miles distant.

The sails, such as they were, were set and we commenced our long and perilous voyage. Our stumps of masts were powerless to steady the vessel, so we slowly rolled along.

The captain had no sheet charts of New Guinea on board, therefore he would have to remain at his first anchorage and trust to Providence.

We had only half a boat left, the other half having been blown away by the hurricane. We fixed a square stern on her and canvassed her all over in order to make her water-tight. She was reduced to a length of 15 feet, so was not capable of carrying more than eight persons, whilst we numbered 20 hands all told.

One of the chief reasons for deciding upon the New Guinea route was that I (Mr. Thompson)

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had previously been there, and should we by good fortune ever reach that country, and be within approachable distance of Samarai, I could find my way there in our boat and procure assistance.

Anxiously the days went by. Occasionally I would go aloft to see if I could discern any signs of land. I was often disappointed; but one day, from my lofty post, I saw what I took to be the "Long Reef," which lies at no great distance to the eastward of New Guinea.

I was not deceived, and before long the heavy roar of the surf as it beat upon it was plainly audible to all on board. The issues of life and death were soon to be decided. Should we fail to steer safely through an opening in the reef, our doom was sealed. Should we strike on those rocks, frowning with a line of breakers bounding on to them in clouds of spray, we should be dashed to pieces and be buried beneath the curling foam.

The moment was an anxious one; all held their breath. We firmly believed our end was fast approaching.

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The cook, who had never been to sea before, came on deck dressed in his Sunday best, ready to go ashore, and prepared to die like a gentleman.

Slightly to windward, a passage in the reef was visible. We made for it, but owing to her peculiar rig the vessel would not answer to her helm, but drifted to leeward, and in a few minutes more would be dashed to pieces amidst the cruel rocks. All hope left our breasts, there was nothing more to be done. We steeled our hearts and prepared ourselves to die like true British sailors. I cared not for myself, but I had a wife and family living in Sydney, and what would become of them after I had gone?

However, just when our doom seemed inevitable, the wind suddenly changed, enabling us to keep her up a couple of points to windward. We then managed to clear the dreaded reef, the surf washing the sides of the vessel, and we emerged safely on the other side. We were all devoutly thankful for our merciful escape from a terrible death.

Delivered as we had been from the jaws of death, our spirits rose proportionately. We now

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had hopes of reaching the New Guinea coast and escaping with our lives.

After avoiding numerous hidden dangers, we succeeded in reaching an anchorage off Dawson Island three days ago.

Such was the graphic account given us by Mr. Thompson.

We obtained the loan of the cutter *Juanita*, which vessel, it will be remembered, had been returned to the Government by the gold prospectors.

She was only seven tons register, but quite large enough for our purpose. Her gear was in very bad order, but with the valuable aid of Mr. Thompson, it was fixed up as well as possible with the poor material at our disposal. At Mr. Thompson's request, I consented to go with him in the *Juanita* to the assistance of the *Myrtle*, and, if possible, bring her into port.

We took with us a few tins of meat, some biscuits, tea, sugar, and last, but not least, a cask of water, as it was impossible to tell how long we should take on the voyage. Everything

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depended on the weather; but with a fair wind it was thought we should reach Dawson Island in one day. On the other hand, we might be several days on the way. We determined to keep going night and day until we reached the *Myrtle*. Both of us knew the locality well, and were not likely to lose our bearings.

Dawson Island is about 25 miles beyond the Engineer Group, and between it and the latter there are dozens of shoals and reefs, so that our local knowledge stood us in good stead.

When coasting along the Island of Basilaki, we met with strong north-easterly winds, which ever and anon would sweep down upon us in strong gusts, causing our little craft to dip her bows into the water. The night was dark, the gusts frequent, and as we were shipping a quantity of water on board, we had to take a couple of reefs in the mainsail. To add to our discomfort the rain came down in drifts, making us shiver again. We made very little way, but still held on, as those on the schooner would be anxiously expecting us, for Mr. Thompson's party had left them four days ago, and they had

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no means of ascertaining their safe arrival at Samarai.

In the middle of the second night we could just make out the outline of the Island of Anna-Goosa, and shortly after losing sight of it we heard a roar, as of heavy breakers, on the port side. The darkness of the night was such as could be felt. We well knew the meaning of the sound, and as we did not wish to hear it more distinctly, we kept to leeward for a time, until the sound had died away into a faint murmur. It was not surf beating upon a rock-bound shore, but an extra-strong "tide-rip" boiling with a force sufficient to turn us round like a top, and, had we been drawn within its vortex, might have destroyed us. The "rip" is strongest at "damoon" or flood-tide, and is caused by the action of the wind against the tide. I never did like these "rips," as they are most dangerous, and when feasible always avoided them.

We soon passed the Island Karaiwa, and had the satisfaction of seeing in the distance Dawson Island, with the schooner *Myrtle* lying a mile or

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so abreast of it. We reached her before sunset, to the great delight of those on board, as they were beginning to fear that some disaster had befallen us. A line was made fast to the *Juanita* and we jumped on board. I was introduced to Captain Tornaros, who at once took me into his cabin, where we discussed the situation over a bottle of old French claret and with the aid of some choice Turkish cigarettes. He recounted to me the experiences of the hurricane. The hull of the vessel was not damaged, but above the deck nothing was left. An immense hole gaped through the bulwarks, and altogether she had a woe-begone appearance. The captain was anxious to know if it was possible, in her present condition, to navigate her safely through the reefs and bring her to China Straits. We considered it was well worth a trial, and, with his consent, we determined to make the attempt the next morning, that is, should the wind be favourable We argued that if the worst came to the worst, she could but be lost, and as she was at present, at anchor off Dawson Island, she was worth nothing to anybody. In case of an

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accident happening, we had the *Juanita*, which was capable of carrying the whole company, so why not make the attempt?

Dawson is one of three islands all lying close to one another. They are not inhabited, though on one of them there are a few native houses which have been deserted for several years. The islands are picturesque, and on one of them is a lofty hill and a few coco-nut trees. They are small in extent, and badly supplied with good water.

There is a narrow passage between the two furthest north, and it was through this opening we intended to go.

In the morning the wind was fortunately blowing from the north-east. Nothing could have been better. The captain at once gave orders to weigh anchor, the sails were hoisted, and we slowly wended our way between the islands without striking on a reef.

Meanwhile a couple of men had been put into the *Juanita*, with strict orders to keep close astern, in case of accidents.

The lead was kept going, as just here the

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place swarms with shoals and small coral-reefs. We passed over them in safety, and in the evening dropped the anchor off one of the islands, having traversed a distance of ten miles. The next day, the wind still remaining in the same quarter, we passed the Engineer Group and managed to reach Doini, 30 miles beyond. We anchored for the night, and on the following day succeeded in reaching China Straits, anchoring off Samarai in ten fathoms of water.

The cargo of the *Myrtle* consisted of general merchandise, and "trade," valued at £1,000. Captain Tornaros offered them at Sydney cost price, with five per cent. added, and succeeded in disposing of a large quantity. He then went to Queensland and informed the underwriters of the loss. They called for tenders for the purchase of the *Myrtle* as she lay at anchor in China Straits. Messrs Burns, Philps and Co., a Queensland firm of shipowners and merchants, bought her for £200, and sent one of their own steamers to tug her to Queensland.

Captain Tornaros was a heavy loser by the disaster, and evidently felt his loss keenly.

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In a few days, to our surprise, the cutter *S——l*, supposed to have been lost, suddenly made her appearance in port. I immediately boarded her, and congratulated Messrs. S——g and W—— upon their safe arrival.

This was the third time that they had been reported as murdered.

At this time preparations were being made by K——, a trader, to form a coffee plantation on the mainland.

The land selected for the purpose was situated near a creek, the mouth of which is close to Coast Island (China Straits). The entrance to the creek is guarded by a small "bar" of sand, which is almost fordable at low water, but at high tide is navigable for small craft. The creek is a tidal one, and of no great depth. The banks are lined with mangroves, whose roots extend far into the water. On the branches are numerous oysters, known by the name of mangrove oysters. They are capital eating, and almost equal to the famous Rock oysters. The creek is about 15 yards wide, and at a little over a mile from the mouth

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suddenly narrows and becomes shallow. Here there is a small native village, containing seven or eight houses. The houses are built on a flat, and in time of heavy rains must be very damp.

The natives are not numerous, and are of a peaceable disposition. Their plantations are situate some distance away. Shortly after leaving the village the mangroves are lost sight of, and you enter a thick forest, lightly timbered and easily penetrated. This forest valley is well watered by numerous small creeks, and is flanked by lofty hills, covered with timber, of no great size, with a tropical undergrowth, and not too difficult of access. The rain-fall here is heavy, but is quickly drained off by the above-mentioned creeks.

Following the creek for some distance, the country gradually becomes more mountainous, and continues so until you get to the other side of the coastal ranges, when you come upon the densely wooded shores of Milne Bay.

We made a thorough investigation of the neighbourhood, and, as a consequence, selected

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a site about a mile beyond the native township. The adjacent hills, or rather mountains, were not too steep for our purpose; moreover, there was an excellent supply of running water, which we could, without much difficulty, bring to bear on it; and, what was still more important, the site was in close proximity to the creek, by which the produce would be conveyed to the coast. No natives claimed the land in question; but, nevertheless, we had to obtain the consent of the Administrator at Port Moresby before we could commence operations.

His consent was readily given. Our first object was to obtain native labour.

I was instrumental in procuring the services of a number of natives from various parts on the mainland and the neighbouring islands.

We engaged them for one moon (one month), supplying them with the necessary tools, such as axes, half-axes, hatchets, etc.

According to our instructions, a small house was built by the natives of the village, to be used by us as a depôt for tools, provisions, etc.

Forty natives were engaged for one month,

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and those who wished to do so could renew their agreement for a further period.

The natives, I may state, are very fair axe-men, as it is work they are accustomed to. The first thing to be done was to form a nursery. For this purpose the slope of a hill, about an acre in extent, was cleared, nothing but a few of the larger stumps being left to rot in the ground. The natives worked well and hard, and accomplished the first part of their task in a creditable manner.

In the nursery we placed several thousand coffee plants for future transplantation. We next had ten acres cleared as a nucleus of the plantation proper.

At the time of my departure from New Guinea, the plants in the "Nursery" had a healthy appearance. In addition to these large quantities of coffee seed had been sown. The results of the experiment cannot, at present, be estimated, as three years must elapse before the first crop appears. Should the venture turn out a success, it will undoubtedly be followed by many others.

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The promoter of it has had considerable experience in working the natives of New Guinea, and is looked up to by them, so that he has a considerable advantage over any new-comers.

I have received no news from that part of the world for the past six months, and therefore am not in a position to form an opinion of the progress that has been made.

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CHAPTER X.

SOUTH COAST.

I HAD never been west of South Cape, but had often had a desire to visit Port Moresby. Finding that a vessel was leaving Samarai in a few days for that place, I decided to embrace the opportunity, as I should not like to leave New Guinea without having visited it. We passed "Kerepunu" and "Hula," two native towns built in the sea, and did not anchor until we reached Moapa, Aroma district.

This latter is the largest and most important district to the westward.

Here I was introduced to the celebrated chief "Koepina."

He can place 4,000 fighting men in the field at a few hours' notice. He is an old man, very tall and erect, with a Roman nose, austere looking, and seldom speaks, but like the renowned parrot, "is a devil to think."

Strange to say, in this district and to the west

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of it the men are absolutely nude, while the women wear the customary grass petticoat.

All the villages have a high palisade fence facing the sea, and extending the whole length of the beach. This acts as a break-wind.

Koepina frequently makes a raid on tribes in the adjoining districts and generally returns successful. The natives of this part speak the Motu language. I spent some time on shore and visited several of the villages.

The natives of Moapa, at the instigation of Koepina, have committed many murders, which in their opinion, is something to be proud of.

We then proceeded to Port Moresby, having taken seven days on the trip. The distance from Samarai is 350 miles. Port Moresby is the headquarters of the London Missionary Society. The site of the mission station was selected by Messrs. Lawes and Macfarlane, the pioneer missionaries of New Guinea, in the year 1873. The Rev. W. G. Lawes had for many years been a missionary in the South Seas, and therefore was well fitted for the work. A few years later the Rev. James Chalmers joined the

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mission, and at the close of the year 1885 the Rev. Dr. Macfarlane severed his connection with New Guinea and left for England, where he now resides. The mission has been established sixteen years, and taking into consideration the enormous difficulties of the undertaking, the result may be deemed satisfactory. Whether they have succeeded in making any real converts to Christianity is a question I prefer leaving open. Certain it is that in districts where their influence has extended, the danger from the hostile acts of the natives has been considerably lessened.

In the first years of its existence Port Moresby was very unhealthy, many of those engaged in the work of the mission falling victims to malarial fever. The health of the place has since improved, and at the present time it is one of the healthiest on the coast.

The harbour forms a large bay, at the head of which stands the Mission Station, consisting of numerous buildings: the dwelling-houses of the leading missionaries, school-houses, a large building in which the services are held, and two

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or three small houses. To the right of the Mission Station, on a prominent rise, is "Government House," the residence of Sir Wm. Macgregor.

On the east side of the bay, and near the entrance, are situated the various Government buildings—the Court House, the Colonial Secretary's Department, and beyond these a general store kept by Mr. Andrew Goldie, a lock-up under the charge of Messrs. Belford and Gleeson, and the dwelling-house of the Judge (Mr. Winter), in which also is the Government Printing Office, where the various official "Gazettes" are published under the superintendence of Mr. J. G. Allen, Government printer.

Below the "Mission Station" stands the native town, "Hanuabada," which contains about 400 inhabitants, and is built in the sea.

The climate of Port Moresby is very dry, and the soil poor. Nothing will grow there, not even yams, so that the natives suffer much from a scarcity of food. The women are very skilful manufacturers of pottery, tastefully ornamented

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and designed. At certain times of the year they take the pottery in their trading canoes far to the westward, where they exchange it for cargoes of sago.

The back country is very mountainous until the valley of the "Laroki" is reached, when a decided change for the better is noticeable.

Instead of barrenness there is fertility. Good pasturage is found, and cultivation commences. The Laroki River is about 17 miles from Port Moresby. After crossing the "Laroki" the country again becomes mountainous and rugged, and is inhabited by numerous hill tribes, both fierce and warlike.

A month previous to my arrival in Port Moresby, viz., July 1st, 1889, Sir Wm. Macgregor had returned from his successful ascent of Mount Owen Stanley.

I saw him on board the s.s. *Merrie England*. He had altered somewhat. He had lost two stone in weight and had a worn appearance; otherwise he was in good health.

As Sir Wm. Macgregor has penetrated further inland than any other white man, and has scaled

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the highest mountain in British New Guinea, the following abridged extract from his report of the journey will, no doubt, be interesting.

"I left Port Moresby on the 20th April, 1889, in my boat, manned with a native crew, accompanied by my staff, and proceeded along the coast to Manumanu. On the 22nd we entered one of the mouths of the Vanapa River, which opens into Galley Reach on its eastern side, about five miles from Manumanu. We got some seven or eight miles up the river the first day, having the tidal water for three or four miles; but beyond that point the river was swollen and muddy, and the current against us strong.

"On the 23rd we continued our course up the river for about seven miles. During the afternoon we began to approach the first low hills in the river's course, and had to ascend two rapids, the first we had met.

"On the 24th we had much difficulty in poling and dragging the boat up some rapids, the current being very strong, and the river, though falling, still deep. On this day we only

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accomplished four miles, in spite of our best exertions.

"On the 25th we continued our ascent, poling, pulling, or dragging the boat. We passed a number of rapids and by night found ourselves with hills on all sides of us. We passed a large rock on the right bank of the river, which seems to be quite exceptional in its formation in this part of the country. It is a grey stone, full of crystalline needles, like manganite.

"After we had pitched camp I went to examine a native-built suspension-bridge, which our hunting party had discovered up stream —a remarkable structure, occurring in such a locality and built by such a primitive people as the inland natives are in this district. At the spot where the bridge stands the river is narrowed by a rocky point that encroaches on the left bank from a steep hill immediately adjoining; advantage has been taken of this in building. The bridge, which is thus only about 70 yards long, is chiefly supported by a large banyan tree, which grows on the rock on the left bank, about 20 feet from the water's edge;

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it starts from this tree at an elevation of about 50 feet above the pool below; descends in mid-stream to about 12 or 15 feet from the water, and rises to about 20 feet on the right bank, where it is suspended to a tree not sufficiently large or strong to receive the whole of this end of the bridge, and is therefore supplemented by a post put into the ground, and this again is strengthened by a cross-bar to the live tree and fixed by stays extending backwards to trees behind. The material employed is rattan cane. Of these, fifteen are used to form supports, but as they have not all been long enough to cross the river, some of them have been joined by knotting. The floor of the bridge is formed of four of these canes, but as two appear to have been broken, the second pair have probably been laid down in effecting repairs. About two feet six inches from the floor there are two rattans on each side, and about two feet three inches above these again are three rattans on the lower, and four on the upper side. They are not plaited or twisted, but are kept in position by split cane worked from the floor to

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the middle and top rattans, which serves the double purpose of connecting the several strands and would probably prevent anyone from falling into the river should one stumble in crossing. A transverse section of the bridge would show it to be nearly V-shaped, but with the sides slightly rounded. The height of the V is about five feet, the width at the top about three feet six inches, and the distance of the middle strands from each other, about two feet. The top strands are kept apart by a cross-stick, the ends of which are tied to the top of each strand. Suitable platform approaches have been built at the ends, and the whole structure is both strong and graceful. Five of our party crossed it at one time, and from all appearances many more could have done so.

"On the 26th the river had become narrower as we advanced, and we had to contend with strong rapids.

"On the 27th we found the rapids very strong, therefore we decided to discontinue the journey in the boat, and selected a suitable camp on the right bank of the river. This place

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became our principal depôt for the expedition. By our estimate it is 40 miles from Manumanu by water, 35 miles of this being on the Vanapa itself. I sent Mr. Cameron, my private secretary, to Port Moresby to procure carriers, provisions, etc., whilst I remained in charge of the party.

"Everywhere there were traces of natives; none, however, were seen. The furthest distance inland from the camp reached by me, was between six and seven miles. Many of my party suffered from ill-health. All the hills in this district were of a slaty formation with thin veins of white quartz.

"About 2½ miles from our camp we discovered, on the 30th April, a rocky height on the first mountain we traversed (Mount Gleeson), whence a very fine view of all the mountains of the interior, right up to the summit of the Owen Stanley Range, could be seen. It was named, and is known to us as "Jack's Rock," and is strongly recommended to future travellers as an excellent observing-point, although its altitude is only about 1,000 feet.

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"On the 12th May Mr. Cameron arrived with 15 men, carrying supplies. The whole of the next few days were spent in preparing the packs for the march inland, to commence next morning.

"We left camp on the 17th May. There marched out, all told, forty-two persons, four Europeans, including myself, George Belford (a Samoan half-caste, a man of excellent character and well acquainted with this country), five Polynesians and thirty-two Papuans.

"As the path had been cut for the first day's march, we covered about four miles before we camped in the afternoon at Exton Junction, where the Exton Creek enters the Vanapa River. We left Exton Junction early on the morning of the 18th, and had at the start some very steep ridges to cross. We passed several creeks in slate and quartz formation which looked, especially one, very promising for gold. The 20th was memorable as being the first time our native carriers expressed a desire to go no farther. On this occasion Belford, by the exercise of patience, by threats and expostu-

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lations, managed to bring the whole company into camp on the north side of Mount Kowald, about 500 feet from the summit.

"We required the whole of the 21st to descend the north side of Mount Kowald, at the foot of which we camped, on the right bank of the Vanapa River. A small native village was seen on a hill five or six miles from us. Mount Kowald was of the usual slaty formation.

"On it we killed three snakes, a matter worthy of mention only because we saw none farther inland. Several people suffered here from fever. Between one and two o'clock a raft was prepared, and by four o'clock we were all safely encamped on the other side of the river.

"We had only covered two and a quarter miles in two days, although those two days had been most fatiguing. On the 23rd we travelled about three miles, at first along the left bank of the Vanapa, and then up one of the spurs and crests of Mount Belford. As it was desirable to get further east before approaching the main range, it was deemed well to follow further along the crest of Mount Belford, whence it was hoped

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a spur might be found which might lead us to Mount Musgrave, and our march was therefore continued along the top of Mount Belford during the whole of the 24th. On the 25th we descended Mount Belford and camped in a wet, gloomy gorge at the foot of it. About three-quarters of a mile from our camp of the 25th we came next morning, at an altitude of 2,635 feet, to the Joseph River,* a fine mountain stream about 20 yards broad, running along the southern foot of Mount Musgrave.

"In the afternoon we camped on a spur leading us right up towards the crest of Mount Musgrave, at a height of 3,380 feet. At daylight next morning the temperature was 73°. On the 27th we continued the ascent of the ridge, following the native path. Fortunately for us the crest we had reached turned round towards the west and north and led us towards the main crest of Mount Musgrave, which was reached on the next day's march. It was determined that we should proceed eastward along the crest of Mount Musgrave until nearly oppo-

* Evidently the San Joseph.—*Author.*

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site Mount Victoria, and then look for a ridge on the north side of Mount Musgrave, leading down in the desired direction. On our way back to camp we met numbers of natives. We soon became on friendly terms with them and managed to obtain a supply of food. They are physically stronger than the coast men. They do not tattoo, neither do they wear nose and ear ornaments. The nose is generally of the Semitic type. They always left our camp before nightfall.

"They are fond of, and will give food in exchange for, salt, beads and cutlery. Tobacco they do not prize greatly, as they grow very good tobacco themselves.

"On the 29th we were able to resume the ascent of the crest of Mount Musgrave, along which we proceeded about two miles on this day and camped at an altitude of 7,180 feet. The temperature was 70° at noon, but at night fell below 60°.

"Mount Musgrave does not differ in formation from Mount Belford; but, somewhat to our surprise, we found it to be composed of

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slate and quartz right to the top. Our path was crossed at several places between 6,000 and 7,000 feet, by well-marked veins of white quartz.

"Finding that there was no prospect of meeting with any spur running towards Mount Victoria (the new name given to Mount Owen Stanley), we determined to descend on the north side of Mount Musgrave. My own party now consisted of Belford, two Polynesians and six Papuans. After a succession of steep cliffs and gorges, we, by ten o'clock, reached a clearing, and after great difficulty in descending the steep rocks at the foot of Mount Musgrave, we reached the Vanapa River at about noon, at the foot of Mount Knutsford. We had considerable difficulty in crossing the Vanapa, on account of the quantity of water and the rapidity of the current. Immediately on effecting the passage we were at the foot of Mount Knutsford, the first mountain we touched connected directly with the Owen Stanley range.

"We ascended about 500 feet, and then

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camped. On the 2nd of June we continued our ascent. A temperature of 69° F. was marked before sunrise. We camped for the night at an altitude of 6,500 feet, where the temperature at 6 p.m. was 67°.

"Next day, June 3rd, we started at 7.30 a.m., and by noon had travelled one mile, when we were completely enveloped in fog, temperature 64° F. On the 5th of June we first came into contact, at an altitude of 9,000 feet, with an undergrowth of bamboo. At 2 p.m. on 6th of June we reached the summit of Mount Knutsford, 11,100 feet high. Here Alpine flowers and plants are met with. The quartz and slate formation extends to the top. The temperature at night and early morning was as low as 45° to 40°.

"We were now left with six days' food, and there was no appearance of any more reaching us. It was not without some anxiety that a forward march was ordered on the morning of the 8th. We accomplished fully five miles in a northerly direction along the summit of Mount Knutsford, and camped on a small creek that

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divides it at its northern end from Mount Griffith. At 9 a.m. next day we crossed the Vanapa for the last time. The altitude of this crossing was 10,130 feet, the temperature 59°. On crossing we began the ascent of the central ridge of the Owen Stanley Range. Early in the afternoon we reached the top of the great ridge at the point named Winter Height, which has an altitude of 11,882 feet, and about 5 p.m. we camped on the lowest part of the great central ridge, forming the lowest part of the central portion of the Owen Stanley Range, to which has been given the name of Dickson Pass. Its height is 10,884 feet, and it divides Mount Douglas from Winter Height. In our camp at Dickson Pass, the morning temperature before sunrise was 44°, and at 8 a.m. 55°. The forest here is mainly composed of cypress. We passed over the top of Mount Douglas, 11,796 feet, and had an opportunity of picking strawberries there. They were small, excellent in flavour, but not quite ripe. At 5 p.m. we pitched camp, after a march of about five or six miles, some four hours' march from the top of Mount Victoria, the name I

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have given to the highest crest of the great Owen Stanley Range.

"At about 11 a.m. of the 11th of June, I reached the top of the north-west peak of Mount Victoria, and I may mention that a few hundred feet from the top of the highest crest I saw the largest vein of quartz I have seen in the 'Possession,' about 15 inches thick. There are no trees on this mountain within 1,500 feet of the top, and but few bushes.

"We were camped two nights on Mount Victoria, the 11th and 12th of June, at an altitude of 12,452 feet, that is, about 670 feet from the top of the highest peaks. The temperature rose in the middle of the day to 70° In the morning the grass was quite white with frost until the rays of the sun reached it. Icicles were brought into the camp, the largest one being over an inch in diameter, and seven or eight inches long. Mount Victoria is, during this season at least, emphatically a dry mountain. The crest of Mount Victoria runs from south-east to north-west, and may be described as composed of six different peaks, but they

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might be divided differently by different observers. The north-west one and the south-east one are a few feet higher than any of the others. The distance between the two is from a mile to a mile and a quarter in a straight line. I ascended to the top of all the peaks, the central ones being most difficult of access, which I climbed only after tremendous exertion. Mount Victoria is far from being the isolated block it has been customary to represent it. It is simply the eastern end of the Owen Stanley Range, which runs without a break, as one continuous whole, from the south-east end of Mount Victoria until the range meets Mount Griffith and Mount Scratchley; the length of this part of the range is about 20 to 25 miles.

"Mr. Cameron's calculations and my observations make the height of Mount Victoria 13,121 feet, an estimate that comes very near to that given on maps and charts, 13,205.

"The north coast was for several hours in the forenoon plainly-distinct from the top of Mount Victoria. This mountain is some 15 to 20 miles nearer to the south than to the north coast. The

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country lying between it and the north coast is far less mountainous than that between it and the south coast.

"Looking from the top of Mount Victoria, only two great mountains are seen between the Owen Stanley Range and the north coast; these two are Mount Gillies and Mount Parkes. They are probably from 7,000 to 8,000 feet high. A valley, some two or three miles long, lies between Mount Parkes on the north, and the ends of Mounts Scratchley and Douglas on the south; this valley widens out and separates Mount Victoria from Mount Parkes.

"Smoke was rising from many points in this valley, which is not less than 30 miles long and will average four or five broad. It appears to carry a considerable population. There is thus north of the Owen Stanley Range, and between it and the north coast, a great extent of comparatively flat country; and there is much more population there than on the south side. It was impossible to see which way the rivers ran. Mr. Belford left a powder-flask on the top of the north-west peak of Mount Victoria, containing

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a paper, on which he has written that I ascended the mountain on the 11th of June, 1889, and named it Mount Victoria. The return journey from the top of Mount Victoria to the coast was accomplished in twelve days."

Sir William Macgregor is a hardy Scotchman, with a tall, gaunt frame, and possessed of great strength. He began life as a ploughman on a farm. He was mainly self-taught, and by dint of industry and perseverance rose to the position of a doctor of medicine.

He held the appointment of Government Health Officer in Fiji, and also took an active part in the administration of that colony. In August, 1888, he was appointed Administrator of British New Guinea.

A better man for the post it would be difficult to find. His energy is untiring, and by his dogged determination he manages to overcome difficulties that would appear to others insuperable.

His manners are rather uncouth, but they are suited to a wild and rugged country like New

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Guinea. Shortly after his arrival in that country he received the honour of knighthood.

During his residence there he has been engaged in exploring different portions of the "Possession."

In December last he ascended the Fly River for upwards of six hundred miles, and reached the boundary dividing the German and English territories.

The following is a short *resumé* of the expedition:—

He started on the 21st of November last in the steamer *Merrie England*. At a point, which he says is beyond D'Albert's farthest, in 5° 54′ S., he found the river divides into two branches of equal size. One of these, named by him the Palmer, he followed up for eight days to the frontier. The whale-boat stopped at 605 miles from the mouth of the river. The first mountains met with in the ascent are on the frontier, and were not explored.

Speaking of the climate, he says: "The heat on the whole, has not been oppressive for this

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latitude. The average day temperature in the shade has been about 85° Fahr., but of course it is a moist heat. The health of the men has been fair, some having suffered from fever—short, sharp attacks."

At a point (not far from Ellengowan Island) above the estuary, the river was found to be 599 yards wide, the rate of current midstream about 3¾ miles an hour, and at 50 yards from the banks about 2¾ miles; the depth was five to six fathoms. The influence of the tide was not observed above 120 miles from the mouth. As a waterway he says "the Fly river will supply excellent means of transport. After proceeding 100 miles the river is very monotonous, and continues so for the next 80 miles. The forest produces no food for man. For European settlement, such a country, as far as can be judged, is quite unsuitable; but, of course, no man can speak of the country beyond a mile or two from the river, the greatest distance to which we could penetrate."

Of the natives of the large island of Kiwai, in the delta, Sir Wm. Macgregor speaks favourably.

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The island is about thirty-six miles long and two and a half broad. Sir William went round it twice, and walked across it once, visiting all the villages, and was everywhere treated with great friendliness. The total population he puts at 5,000. They produce large quantities of vegetable food, which may in future create a considerable export trade. The cultivation of the banana receives from them much attention. They have no fewer than thirty-six different varieties. They also plant and cultivate sago trees, of which they distinguish twenty-five varieties; of yams they grow twenty kinds, three of which are remarkably good; and of sweet potatoes ten, two of which are suitable for exportation. They possess no knowledge of pottery. The sole utensil is a large slipper-shell. Its name is "wedere," and the consequence is that the Kiwai native has no other name than "wedere" for all our pots and pans and different kinds of dishes.

* * * * * *

In August news reached me of the murder of two white men by the natives of Cloudy Bay,

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South coast. Both men were well-known to me; one of them I had known for many years. Their names were "Jimmy McTeer" and "Frenchy."

They had been in the Louisiades digging for gold, had been fairly successful, and had arrived in Samarai early in July, where I saw a good deal of them. They had a great idea of thoroughly prospecting the mainland for gold, and intended to start from the head of Milne Bay, which is on the south-east coast, and make their way overland to Port Moresby, and determine, once and for ever, whether the country carried gold. It was a most hazardous undertaking for two men to attempt, but they were plucky young fellows, used to "roughing it" and without fear.

I entertained serious notions of accompanying them, but fortunately, as events proved, I was suffering from fever and was unable to withstand the fatigues of the journey.

"Frenchy" had about 16ozs. of gold. I advised him to leave it behind at Samarai, in case of accidents, but he decided to take it with

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him, as it might come in handy when he reached Port Moresby. I suggested that it would be as well to wear a suit of armour, as in their journey they would meet with thousands of savages. They considered my suggestion a good one, so we fixed some corrugated iron on to a coco-nut tree. We then stood 30 paces off and hurled spears against it. The experiment proved a failure, the spear penetrating the iron into the tree.

They then suggested tortoise-shell, but whether they carried out the idea or not I cannot say.

They were of course armed with rifles and revolvers, but of what avail would they be against thousands of hostile natives? Nothing, however, would prevent them making the attempt, and they had good hopes of accomplishing their task.

I saw them off to Milne Bay, and wished them good-bye, with the fervent hope that they would meet with no disaster and arrive safely in Port Moresby.

Yet I hardly expected that they would escape

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from a cruel death. Both were young men with good constitutions, accustomed to hardships, and who would sell their lives dearly. The start was made from the village "Maivara," a number of natives watching their departure with interest.

The two, who had been mates together for some time, and had passed safely through many dangers, commenced their lonely tramp with brave hearts and in good spirits.

This was the last seen of the unfortunate travellers.

The first week of their journey, how they got on, what dangers they may have passed through, will never be known. It must ever remain a blank. One circumstance alone we know. When they had reached the country at the back of Cloudy Bay, they were surrounded by hundreds of savages and treacherously put to death. Their heads had been completely severed from their bodies, and one of the skulls, when found, was discovered smashed into pieces.

By-and-by the news reached Port Moresby

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Sir Wm. Macgregor at once ordered the *Merrie England* to proceed to Cloudy Bay, with an armed party on board, who were instructed to find, if possible, the remains of the murdered men, and to punish the ill-doers.

A force of twelve men, well armed, landed as directed, and marched inland, where they came upon a large village, near which they found the two skulls (or rather what was left of them) of the unhappy victims. They also came upon the gold which "Frenchy" had in his possession, and which the natives had left untouched.

This discovery conclusively proved the identity of the men.

The armed party from the *Merrie England* shot down several of the natives, and informed the others that, unless the ringleaders were given up, they would destroy the village and its inhabitants. Two more good and true men have been added to the long list of those who have met with a tragic death in British New Guinea. Let us trust that they may be the last. The hope is no doubt a vain one, but we cannot be blamed for expressing such a wish.

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CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

THE coast runs as nearly as possible west-north-west and east-south-east. It has a most bold appearance, mountains of Alpine height, from 8,000 to 13,000 feet, rearing their heads, looking down in their awful majesty, backed by lofty ranges covered with dense scrub. The geological formation is sometimes basaltic, at others slate, porphyry, etc. Numbers of coral reefs jut out from the mainland, making the navigation difficult. Hundreds of islands of various extent are dotted here and there, sparkling in the sun like gems, diversifying the scene and lending colour to the landscape.

There are several magnificent rivers which carry off the great torrents of water from the mountains, notably the "Fly," named by the officers of H.M.S. *Fly*, when engaged in surveying the south coast in the year 1845. The "Fly" empties itself into the great "Gulf

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of Papua" and is navigable for six hundred miles from the coast inland. It will be the main waterway of New Guinea in the future. Then there are the "Baxter," the "San Joseph," "Aird," and "Tait," besides many others of less importance. The harbours are few and far between; the principal ones in British New Guinea are China Straits on the south-east coast, and Port Moresby and Hall Sound on the south coast.

There are no wild animals in the strict sense of the term, the chief ones being the wild ordinary tusked hog (Babi-rusa), cassowary, wallaby, tree-kangaroo (Dendrolagus), cuscus, opossum and alligators. Snakes are to be met with, but are not so numerous as in Queensland.

There are numbers of birds of beautiful plumage, the far-famed Bird of Paradise, of which there are something like twenty varieties, whose haunt is the tallest trees on the mainland, some 40 or 50 varieties of pigeons, the gigantic crowned pigeon among them, the rifle bird, etc.

Besides these, there are thousands of scrub hens, parrots, cockatoos (both black and white),

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and the flying fox, a species of bat, which, when young, is capital eating. At night, just after sundown, they come in large flocks to the trees, where they feed on the fruit.

The butterflies are magnificent, they are most gorgeous in colour and of immense size, some of them measuring from tip to tip of the wings over a foot in length. The sea furnishes the celebrated "Dugong," or sea-cow, the flesh of which is equal, if not superior, to that of an ordinary cow. The oil obtained from the Dugong is, or rather was, very valuable. Unfortunately, it has of late years been much adulterated, and thus the marketable value has been lowered. Then there are turtles, many of them of great weight. It is not uncommon to find them to the weight of 5 cwt. The harbours swarm with edible fish of all kinds, the king-fish, sea salmon, barramundi, cod, yellow tail, and a host of others. Take it altogether, Nature in these parts has been bountiful in her gifts. The climate is very unhealthy, the tropical scrub being a harbinger of malignant fevers, malaria, etc.; and it will

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take years of cultivation before it alters for the better. The natives even are subject to attacks, but in a milder form. Where there is little scrub and no swamp, fever is not quite so prevalent. Quinine is the best remedy, but it should be taken advisedly.

The prevailing wind, which blows from the south-east, lasts for eight months, from April to November inclusive, when the north-west monsoon sets in.

The average rainfall is heavy, especially at the eastern end, where there is no decided wet season. At Port Moresby, on the other hand, the annual rains generally commence in January continuing until the end of March. The remainder of the year is exceedingly dry, so much so that nothing can be cultivated.

The heat of New Guinea is a moist one, and at times very great. The mean temperature in the shade during the summer months is 85°; were it not for the trade winds, the heat would be overpowering. Winter is unknown in these latitudes. In June and July the mornings and evenings are fresh and comparatively cool.

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With this exception, it is impossible to distinguish winter from summer.

The tides are very strong, and most irregular. Occasionally there will be only one tide in 24 hours. I have studied the tides for many days, but they remain an enigma to me. No doubt the irregularity is partly caused by the numerous islands which would naturally cause a deviation. Therefore, the irregularity is, maybe, only an apparent one. I do not pretend to be learned in the laws of tides, but older and wiser heads than mine have been hopelessly puzzled by them. At full and change it is high water at 8 a.m., once a year there is an unusually high tide, called in consequence, a "king tide."

The strongest wind blows from the westward and is known to the natives as an "Arras." It occurs in the months of February and March, and as a rule lasts for a couple of days, when there is a lull. It blows with great force, causing a nasty sea, so when anchored it is wise to "pay out" plenty of chain, or you may find your vessel has dragged and is being drifted

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away by the tide at the rate of six or seven knots an hour. The tide runs parallel with the coast. This is comforting, as, should you drift away in the night unawares, you run no risk of being stranded on a coral shore.

Some friends of mine were fast asleep on board their craft and awoke to find they had drifted ten miles from home and it took them the whole of the next day to beat back again to their anchorage.

The native population is estimated at 300,000. This is, however, a very rough estimate, as no census has ever been taken; also the interior is a *terra incognita*. The population of the coast can be fairly gauged, but who can tell what number of inhabitants the interior contains? There is every reason for believing that parts of the interior carry a dense population. Great valleys have been seen in the distance; immense tracts of grass land have been cleared, evidently for the purposes of cultivation.

There are, I am aware, certain districts along the coast where the population is sparse. This

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can always be accounted for by the poverty of the soil. Likewise parts of the interior may be unfit for cultivation, and therefore would be thinly inhabited.

Nevertheless, treating the interior as an unknown quantity, I consider the estimate given, viz., 300,000, to be well under the mark. Regarding the vitality of the race, there are no signs of decay. Generally speaking, the natives are a healthy and vigorous people, and are more likely to increase in numbers than die out. They are well-housed and well-fed, very different from the nomadic tribes of Australia. The mountain tribes of New Guinea live principally by the chase, but have also plantations on which they cultivate large quantities of vegetables. The natives of the coast live on the products of their gardens and by fishing. They have no knowledge of any intoxicating drinks, not even of "Kava," the Fijian beverage, which is made from a palm. Therefore if they do not imbibe the vicious tastes of civilization there is no reason why they should not perpetuate their race for many

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centuries to come. The chief products of the country are mother-of-pearl shell, Bêche-de-mer (or trepang), copra, and tortoise-shell.

The pearl shell is a big oyster, and is found in from fifteen to twenty fathoms of water. It is obtained by divers in a diving dress. The best dresses and pumps are made by Heincke & Co., of London. The cost of a pump, including two double dresses, gear, etc., is £185, and if looked after it will keep in good order for a number of years. The diver receives £3 10*s.* per 100 shells, and is found in victuals. At times he makes as much as £25 per week, but the amount varies greatly. They are a most improvident class of men and reckless in the extreme. They spend their money as fast as they earn it, and in many instances before they have done so. Their occupation entails great risk, hence their recklessness.

The boats used for the purpose are small luggers, from eight to fifteen tons register; the pump is worked by natives, and the crew consists of the diver, who acts as skipper, and a couple of South Sea Islanders or Malays, one

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of whom has charge of the plumb-line, and the other acts as "tender" to the diver and has charge of the life-line.

Great risk is incurred by the diver; the pressure from the depth of water, which in places exceeds twenty fathoms, nearly always producing paralysis and often death. The lower limbs are usually affected. The first thing to be done is to give the patient a warm hip-bath, then apply a galvanic battery to the parts affected, and should this treatment not have the desired effect resort must be had to more drastic measures. I have treated several divers for paralysis, and unless it was a very severe attack have always found the above treatment efficacious. Should a diver die on board his boat, a flag is run up half-mast.

At Samarai, one day, I received a start. One of our pearl-shelling boats was working in China Straits. To my surprise, I heard the reports of a rifle in rapid succession. About two miles distant I could see smoke rising from the stern of the boat.

The wind was very light, and she was being

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propelled by sweeps in the direction of Samarai. Evidently they were in distress. I lost no time, hailed a couple of black boys, jumped into a boat and rowed in all haste to see what was the matter. Presently I discovered they had hoisted their flag half-mast high. I at once concluded that the diver, "Ned," was dead. We soon overtook them, and I leapt on board, taking it for granted that "Ned" would never dive again. Imagine my surprise to find "him" lying contentedly on his bunk, with eyes wide open, and looking very unlike a corpse. I felt very much annoyed with them for raising a false alarm. They explained that "Ned" had been slightly paralysed and that they had run up the flag half-mast for a joke. I failed to see the joke. "Ned" managed to walk on shore without support. We gave him a hot bath, and in half-an-hour "Richard was himself again."

The shell is found in straits where the tide is strongest, making it impossible to operate except at "slack" water. The shells lie in heaps, one on the top of the other, and in some places scattered apart.

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In the London market, the value of the shell, which has to be cleaned, scraped, and packed in cases previous to shipping, varies from £90 to £170 a ton according to quality. The most valuable are "chicken" or young shell. It takes 600 to make a ton, the average weight being about 3lbs. The cost of the cases is 5*s.* 6*d.* each, and the shipping expenses from New Guinea to London amount to £15 to £20 a ton, including London commission. Valuable pearls are occasionally found in the shells, in the belly of the fish, and are produced by a disease of the shell, and are found only in grubby, wormeaten ones. Pearl shelling in New Guinea is pretty well worked out, as no new patches have been discovered for some months.

Bêche-de-mer or "Trepang" is a kind of sea slug, and is found on the reefs in a few feet of water.

There are eight different species, differing greatly in value, viz., teat, black, red, prickly red, surf red, lollie, white and sand. The best, "teat," so called from the formation of "teats" on the fish, is worth from £100 to £130 at the

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nearest Queensland port (Cooktown), whilst lollie is of the value of £25 to £30 a ton.

The whole of it is purchased by the Chinese merchants and is shipped to Hong-Kong, where it is eventually retailed out at a very high figure. It is most nutritious and makes capital soup. Two fish will make enough soup for six persons. It requires a great deal of boiling, twenty-four hours being the allotted time.

The method of obtaining it, is to go with two or three boats full of natives to a large reef, choosing fine, calm weather, when the natives dive for them. You then erect a smoke-house on shore, or, if the vessel be large enough, on board, get your boilers and boil the fish well. Your smoke-house should have three separate layers or slides; care should be taken to keep up a good fire and to change your fish from one slide to the other. The fuel used is wood, of which you can always get a plentiful supply. The whole operation takes about three days; you then refill your boilers and proceed in like manner. The fish should now be thoroughly cured. You then bag it in corn sacks, and

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previous to shipping, capsize the bags, dry the fish in the sun, sort out the various species and qualities, re-bag them, and send them away.

Copra is made from old coco-nuts only. The husks are removed and thrown away as rubbish. The shells are then placed in a smoke-house and kiln-dried, or, when possible, sun-dried. The nuts or kernels are smashed up and then bagged. It takes fully seven thousand nuts to make a ton, and the value in the London market is £13 to £14 for kiln-dried, and £14 to £15 for sun-dried. The margin for profit is small, but if a sufficient quantity be obtainable (say twenty-five tons per month) the industry becomes profitable.

The natives value their coco-nut plantations, and attend to their cultivation. At certain seasons numbers of the trees have the trunks covered with a network of rattan cane. This is a sign that such trees are "tabu" or sacred. Woe betide the man who violates the mandate until the symbol has been removed. In this manner the trees are preserved. Did we take the same trouble with our forest timber, we

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should not be obliged to spend vast sums of money every year in importing timber from America and other foreign countries.

Many natives are employed in the copra industry, the work always being done on shore, for which they are paid in "trade."

Of course in these undertakings, you are always in a certain amount of danger from the hostility of the natives, but as I have previously remarked, "You must exercise caution and not give them a chance." A fair amount of trade is done in tortoise-shell, but, as a rule, the natives are loth to part with any large quantity, and are rather exorbitant in their demands. Tortoise-shell fetches in Sydney from 5s. 0d. to 10s. 6d. per lb., according to quality. I have no doubt, with some trouble, the trade in tortoise-shell could be increased.

The soil and climate of New Guinea are well adapted for the cultivation of coffee, tea, indigo, india-rubber, cotton, sugar, rice, tobacco, sago, etc. A coffee plantation has already been started on the mainland. The natives inland grow very good tobacco. They have also

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plantations of sugar-cane on many of the islands and mainland. The cane seems to thrive well, and from all appearances is of good quality. They do not manufacture sugar from it, but simply chew the cane, of which they are inordinately fond.

They manufacture sago, but do not granulate it. Oranges and lemons grow to perfection. There is a plantation of them at Su-au (South Cape), and on Wari (Teste Island). This industry, if undertaken by Europeans, on a large scale, would, I have no doubt, pay handsomely. In Queensland it pays, and why should it not in New Guinea?

In Fiji and Samoa, cotton, sugar and tea are grown to advantage. The climate there is much the same as that of New Guinea, therefore there is nothing, so far as I can see, to prevent them from being cultivated in the latter country. The two things most necessary to develop the above-mentioned industries are cheap land and capital. The Government of New Guinea have not, I believe, as yet formulated their land policy, but I should think that to anyone intro-

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ducing capital into the country, for the purpose of starting a genuine enterprise, they would be only too glad to offer every inducement. The great drawback at present, is the unhealthiness of the climate, but as cultivation proceeds, that will improve.

In considering the feasibility of these undertakings, the first question that presents itself is the labour question.

What labour would there be available? Would it be possible to utilise the natives of the country, or would it be necessary to import black labour? The question is, I admit, a serious one, as upon the answer depends the success of such undertakings. Now, I have had considerable experience in working the natives and therefore my opinion should have some weight. I have no hesitation in saying that it would be possible to utilise the natives as labourers. I have undertaken several contracts in New Guinea, the work being done solely by natives.

One of the contracts was to clear a swamp of seven acres of all the timber on it, and to cut up

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the timber into suitable lengths for building purposes, and to stack it outside the swamp, and to burn the undergrowth and small stuff in heaps. I engaged twenty-five natives, and before commencing operations, made a contract with two of the leading men to execute the work at so much per head, giving to the two Taubadas or chiefs, a little extra. The work occupied 12 days, and was performed in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. I superintended it, and was very much pleased with the result. The wages were paid on completion of the contract in hatchets, long knives, tobacco, etc. On the Saturday night, the natives appeared in a row, awaiting payment. I asked them if the job was finished, to which they all replied "Yes, and that their backs were nearly broken with the hard work," which merely meant that they were tired, and were in a hurry to receive the "trade."

As seeing is believing in these matters, before paying them I examined the work, and found that they were mistaken. They had still five or six hours' work left to complete their task. However, when I informed them of the fact,

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they stated it was Saturday night, that they wanted to get home to their island, and evidently did not want to return on the Monday morning for the sake of a few hours.

I was on the horns of a dilemma. They had worked well, still I did not want to be cheated, and on the other hand I wished them to go away in good humour as I might require their services again before long.

How was I to act? A happy thought struck me. I made them a neat little speech, in which I told them that I would pay them straight away, and that they could go home to their wives that same evening. How their faces beamed with delight! I went on to say that the work had not been finished by them, so in consequence I had decided to deduct four sticks of tobacco off each man's payment. I then paid them the balance, and upon asking them if they were satisfied received an answer in the affirmative. They also said they would be glad to come again whenever I might require them.

So we parted friends, both parties being satisfied with the arrangement.

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They departed in good spirits, and on the Monday I obtained some natives from another island, who finished the job in one day.

The way you work the natives is of the utmost importance.

Never cheat them, and never allow them to cheat you. Treat them kindly but with firmness, and never lose your temper.

Follow this advice, and, I can vouch for it, you will find them tractable and good workmen. I can strongly recommend the natives of Milne Bay (Mainland), the islands of Sariba and Loger (China Straits) and the island of Wari, either for plantation work, or the building of houses. The islanders of Wari are by far the best sailors, the others very indifferent.

Unlike Australia, New Guinea is never subject to periodical droughts, and when it becomes better known, British capital will be introduced. Industries will spring up, and the country will eventually be developed and become the home of many of our fellow countrymen. And now, my task being done, if task indeed

YEARS 1940-1941 DROUGHT FAIRLY GENERAL
NATIVE GARDENS [illegible] PM DISTRICT

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it can be called, I must bid farewell to the reader.

If he has been as much interested in the perusal of this narrative as I have been in writing it, I am more than repaid for my trouble. Should he at any time visit New Guinea, he will find much to interest him, much to study and think about, and, let us hope, will return to Old England with a mind enlarged, a wiser and a better man.

FINIS.

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APPENDIX.

VOCABULARY OF LANGUAGE.

SOUTH-EAST COAST.

SUBSTANTIVES.

ENGLISH.	NATIVE.
Man	Tau
Woman	Sina
Boy	Wauwaia
Girl	Hasara
Child	Natuna
Father	Tamada
Mother	Sinana
Friend	Eliam
House	Numa
Village	Magai
Garden	Tapaiṣoa
Wood	Kaiwa
Fire	Karassi
Water	Waiila
Anchorage	Gaboa
Island	Bona-bona
Canoe	Wagga
Paddle	Worsa
Tomahawk	Kilam
Knife	Nigua
Spear	Wamari
Coco-nut	Niu
Betel-nut	Sada
Banana	Baiira
Sago	Rabia
Yam	Quatea

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SUBSTANTIVES—*continued.*

ENGLISH.	NATIVE.
Taro	Kudo
Sweet Potato	Kumara
Fish	Yama
Tobacco	Musa-Musa
Box	Didiwagga
Property	Ginauri
Chief	Taubada
Turtle	Warna
Dog	Kedewa
Cat	Simai
Rat	Gimau
Pig	Buroka
Fowl	Kom-Kom
Flying-fox	Mariboi
Bird	Roro
Pigeon	Siai
Land	Yamba
Rocks	Weku
Rope	Maina
Stomach	Boka
Eye	Mata
Face	Papari
Sun	Mahana
Moon	Waiikeno
Star	Kipara
Wind	Mana
Rain	Nabu
Month	Waiikeno
Day	Mahana
Death	Boita
Sunrise	Dabura Kuraoma
Sunset	Daburadui
White man	Dim-Dim
Beads	Burra Dim-Dim
Enough	Besi
Plenty	Baibaiwa
Humbug	Mamakotto
To-day	Wau
Yesterday	Lahinai
To-morrow	Marritomtom

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PRONOUNS.

ENGLISH.	NATIVE.
I	Yau
You	Kowa
Me	Yau
We	Ta

VERBS.

Speak	Ewaro
Sleep	Ekeno
Sit down	Kuturi
Lie down	Kakeno
Stand up	Kutoro
See	Kita
Understand	Raupoi
Work	Buggi-Buggi
Finish	Koiko
Go away	Kurau
Come here	Kuraoma
Give	Quaima
Sing	Wana

ADJECTIVES.

Good	Kausala
Bad	Inai
Sick	Kassieba
Wild	Yauyauri
After	Sora
Big	Elaki
Small	Kekina
Important	Bada
True	Mamahoi

INTERJECTIONS.

Thanks	Te Nani
Good-day	Te Nani
Good-bye	Kaioni
What name	Esam

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INTERJECTIONS—*continued.*

ENGLISH.	NATIVE.
Look-out	Ni
Yes	Oo
No	Nigere
NUMERALS.	
One	Kesega
Two	Raubui
Three	Tolo
Four	Esopai
Five	Arigiki
Six	Arigiki Kesega
Seven	Arigiki Raubui
Eight	Arigiki Tolo
Nine	Arigiki Esopai
Ten	Nimabobo
Eleven	Nimabobo Kesega
Fifteen	Nimabobo Arigiki
Sixteen	Nimabobo Arigiki Ke-
Twenty	Tauimate [sega

I cannot vouch for the correctness of the above spelling.

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